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THE CZAR.





THE CZAR

IVAN VASSILIVITCH, THE TERRIBLE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“MANUELLA, THE EXECUTIONER'S DAUGHTER, A STORY OF
MADRID;” “ANTONIO FOSCARINI,” &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

* Ich bin der Reußen herr und König
Meines and lichen Erbs benügig
Hab von nyemot nichts erbetn nach geßhaufft
Bin in namen Gottes ein Christ getaufft.

* “Mauvais vers allemands composés à ce que l'on assure par lui
même.” *Karamsin.*

VOL. I.

NEW EDITION,

(WITH PORTRAIT.)

EDWARD SMALLWOOD,
BOOKSELLER AND PUBLISHER,
17, OLD BOND STREET, LONDON.

M DCCCXL.

PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION

R U S S I A,

FROM THE DEATH OF IVAN IV.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“THE CZAR, IVAN VASSILIVITCH,” “MANUELLA, THE EXECUTIONER’S DAUGHTER,” “ANTONIO FOSCARINI,” &c.

J. Cunningham, Printer, Crown-court, Fleet-street.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I cannot allow this opportunity to pass by, without making a few brief observations on the strange ignorance of early Russian history displayed by some of my reviewers, and on their still stranger misconception of the motives that induced me to pen that historical romance. I selected the period of Ivan's singular reign, because it was pre-eminently original and untrodden by the host of indiscriminate novelists; a period from which the clouds and darkness of historic doubt were slowly removing without dissipating the marvellous and the terrible connected with it; and also, because it was a period in which a nation, now mighty and ascendant in the scale of politics, was then upwaking from the long sleep of barbarism to conquer cities and provinces, and to shape the scattered and discordant masses of its power into a fixed and permanently consolidated form of the most gigantic despotism. Though torrents of human blood flowed recklessly during the dominion of Ivan—though his private life was sullied and defiled with vices of the darkest and the deepest dye—it was an era of supreme importance for Russia;—it was the first young effort of unmitigated barbarism to assume for itself those codes of policy, and to adopt those relations of commerce, which were the source of the luxurious civilization of surrounding empires.

I chose Ivan, moreover, for a reason more philosophical; that I might have a being, the analysis, the anatomy of whose life and actions, both as czar and man, would enable me to manifest the horrors of despotism, and to demonstrate with what supernatural force the germ of tyranny, at first uncrushed, sprung up and overshadowed every town and province that acknowledged his sway. Tacitus indignantly bared to the world the profane atrocities of a Tiberius and a Domitian, that his Roman readers abhorring the dreadful perpetrators, might again return to the sphere of pure and virtuous liberty. I endeavoured to depict the crimes of Ivan, that my readers might moralize and learn that it is from private and particular acts of injustice and oppression, that the spirit of universal despotism has its rise.

I adopted the form of historical romance, because I thought it calculated to soften and temper the horrors of the prominent individual, by the introduction of milder and purer characters. These, however, were so framed, that in no ways did they interfere with, or mar the truth of the narrative; they were merely the '*dulce medicamentum*,' the sweets, as it were, spread round the edge of the cup, to woo more effectually the tastes of those, who might have turned away from a stern and undisguised delineation of the tyrant. In acknowledging the depth, extent, and accuracy of my researches, my reviewers have done me but strict justice; for it was my paramount study to leave no record unperused, that could either immediately or analogously throw a gleam of light on the period, or on the actors, that made it so conspicuous. My residence for some time in Russia gave me a facility in painting the manners and customs of the people, and my attempt has been allowed by all to exhibit a faithful and unprejudiced picture.

THE AUTHOR.

After Rev. Rev. 2 July 56 No. 1840 = 1840; 34

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

WE have characters of manly worth, and womanly gentleness, in the persons of Sir Thomas Randolph, Elizabeth's Ambassador, his Secretary, the learned master Tuberville, and his lovely daughter Grace;—nor must we omit the redoubted Jocko, the first monkey, it is recorded, ever seen in Russia, whose strange pranks, and yet more strange proportions, help much to the progress and the amusement of the work, &c.—*Argus, Feb. 2.*

The author is so intimately acquainted with the characteristics of Russia, that in the midst of massacres, burnings, and assassinations, the infidel revels of the tyrant and the desolating slaughter of the Oprichnina (the germ of the Strelitz, afterwards crushed by the giant hand of PETER the Great), he attracts attention to a variety of points in the history and domestic traits of the empire, which will well reward the curiosity of the reader. As histories are not always exclusively read by the multitude, this work may be safely referred to for a dramatic picture of the Titan oppressor of Russia.—*Atlas, 22nd February, 1840.*

THE CZAR. A Romance of History. By the Author of Antonio Foscarini, &c. Smallwood, London.—The desire of variety in the present day has given birth to a new species of novel; a novel partly historical, inasmuch as it contrives to introduce the narrative of some striking period of modern history; and partly in the nature of an instructive voyage and travels, inasmuch as it lays its scenes in foreign climes, and introduces us to an acquaintance with the habits and manners of remote lands. The Czar is a novel of this character. Its object is to give an account of Russian scenery and manners, and it accordingly introduces its heroine upon the splendid stage of a Russian palace. It happens rather singularly, that it has occurred to us to know that the main incident in this story is not so extravagant as it appears; we mean the casual introduction, and by degrees the gradual admission into domestic intimacy of a young English woman, a merchant's daughter, into the palace and family of a Russian empress.—*Bell's Weekly Messenger, February 15th.*

WE were disposed to angur favourably of this work, from the reputation acquired by the former writings of the author. He has travelled much and thought much; and succeeds in communicating the information he has acquired, in such a manner as greatly to interest and excite his readers. The country and the time are full of romance; and ample use has been made of the materials they furnish. His details are full of striking incident, and he works them up in a manner that cannot fail to produce the deepest interest. His story, too, is a good one. The volume will be read both with profit and pleasure; and as a companion for a dull evening may be sought for with a certainty of ministering much gratification.—*The Britannia.*

IN the composition of these volumes much taste and judgment have been displayed. The author appears to have consulted all the best historical authorities which bore directly on his subject, and has produced a very touching and interesting romance, without either perverting or distorting the annals of the time of which he treats. The character of the celebrated Czar Ivan Vassilivitch, surnamed the Terrible, is drawn

with great truth and effect; and though some of the deeds of this sceptred barbarian are of the most inhuman and revolting nature, yet does the reader feel an almost unaccountable interest in his woes and crimes. This monarch, who was contemporary with our Elizabeth, notwithstanding his cruelty and rapacity, and the craven cowardice which marked his latter days, is entitled, taking the character of the times into consideration, to pity rather than abhorrence. His conduct after the death of Marfa Sabakim, though revengeful and terrible, was, we think, quite natural. The ruffian, Maluta Skuratoff, is a bold and original conception, and forms an admirable contrast to the gallant and chivalrous Koltzo, the Cossack leader. Queen Elizabeth's famous Ambassador, Sir Thomas Randolph, and the English physician, Wilmington, are quiet yet effective sketches. The young Czarina and the English maiden are sweetly painted, and excite the interest and sympathy of the reader in a very high degree. The liveliness and pleasantries of the secretary, George Tuberville, form an agreeable relief to the more sombre portions of the work; while the feats of the renowned Jocko, if they were not in some measure borne out by the testimony of history, would be considered as absurd and extravagant in the highest degree. The exploits of this worthy, who belongs to the mischievous but intelligent class known by the name of monkey, is a first-rate genius in his way, and is famous amongst the Muscovites to this moment. Perry, in his 'State of Russia,' and Crull, in his 'Muscovy,' make honourable mention of him. We must not forget, however, to mention the powerful and masterly sketch of the Boyarina Basmanoff. This woman, who is an inferior kind of Lady Macbeth, is the mainspring upon which the interest of the narrative turns. She sacrifices all and everything to ambition, but is eventually caught in her own toils, and falls herself a victim. Her remorse and terrific death are depicted with great force and truth. The plot is rather of too intricate a nature for us to attempt any detail, but it is of that stirring and thrilling description which, from the numberless emotions which it awakens in the breast of the reader, will be universally admired. *The Court Journal, Saturday, March 14th, 1840.*

OUR author possesses eloquence, research, and an accurate knowledge of the country wherein his scenes are laid: and such requisites ought to make his writings admired.—*Court Magazine, Feb. 1840.*

THIS most extraordinary production must prove a favourite.—It is a work of great talent; and no one can read it without having his attention strongly fixed, the details are so striking, and the story so full of interest. The reign of Ivan the Terrible, Czar of Muscovy, is one of the most infamous in modern history, although comparatively little is known of his atrocities in this country, and the details given by the author, who has travelled in Russia, and is well acquainted with the character and habits of the people, are of a most startling and even fearful description. The work is valuable from the light thrown upon Russian manners at a dark and troublous period, when the monarch was a despot of the worst kind, and his semi-barbarous subjects were little better than the slaves of his will and the victims of his cruelty. The darkest picture has its bright side, and there are scenes and descriptions scattered throughout the work which tend to relieve and enliven those parts of the narrative in which the blood-stained Czar and his savage myrmidons figure so terribly. Sir Thomas Randolph, ambassador from Queen Elizabeth; Doctor Wilmington,

English Physician to Ivan; Grace, his beautiful daughter; and George Tuberville, the poet, the ambassador's secretary, are among the personages introduced. There is, besides, in Sir Thomas' suite, a monkey, the first animal of the kind ever seen in Muscovy, which plays some "fantastic tricks," to the great amazement and terror of the ignorant inhabitants. The work is well sustained throughout, and is one that cannot fail of obtaining a lasting popularity.—*Edinburgh Observer*, 22nd May, 1840.

THE CZAR; A ROMANCE OF HISTORY. E. SMALLWOOD.—This production comes upon us with the charm of comparative novelty. It is gratifying to peruse a work dealing in scenes unhackneyed by the every-day literature; and passages of high power and strong interest are profusely spread through the three volumes. We are glad to find an author of power calling attention (by the irresistible call of attractiveness) to a country *too little observed*.—*Sunday Times*.

THIS is a new romance from the pen of the author of "Manuella," and other works, and is written with considerable power. The scene is laid in Russia during the reign of the frantic Ivan, Grand Duke of Muscovy *tempus* Elizabeth; and we cannot deny to him the high praise of having rendered a very repulsive subject most interesting and instructive. "The Czar" cannot fail to be read largely and with avidity.—*Weekly Chronicle*, February 2.

The Czar; a Romance of History. By the author of "Manuella," "The Executioner's Daughter," &c. &c.

A bright and animated romance is "the Czar," displaying knowledge of the country in which the scene is laid, and no mean artistic skill. The hero of the romance is the monster, Ivan Vassilivitch; and a more striking picture of the far-reaching and diabolical influences of despotism has seldom been produced in a fiction than this sketch of his career. But the characters of Ivan and his satellites are no fiction. Truth is even veiled and softened, to render them barely tolerable to the English reader. The story is connected with English sympathies, by the introduction of the English physician to the Czar, and his daughter; and the ambassador of Elizabeth (Sir Thomas Randolph) to the court of Russia. The court of Nicholas will not greatly relish this faithful and spirited description of the Court of Ivan Vassilivitch, long, in every way, as is the interval between them.—*Tait's Magazine for April*, 1840.

THIS extraordinary work has been fitly designated a romance of the most startling character. The author has selected new ground—ground hitherto unoccupied. He has gone to one of the darkest periods in the history of Russia, and chosen for the principal personage of his story, Ivan the Terrible, Czar of Muscovy, whose deeds of cruelty have rendered his name for ever infamous. The ground-work, it will thus be seen, is purely historical, and the author has kept as closely to truth as the nature of his subject will allow. The whole history of Ivan's reign is full of romance—scenes and incidents of the most absorbing interest follow each other like the shifting representations in a phantasmagoria, equally dark and equally fearful. The narrative, however, is relieved and enlivened by the introduction of an English party, who move among the Muscovite barbarians, like beings of a superior order. These are Sir Thomas Randolph, Ambassador from Queen Elizabeth to the Russian

Court; his Secretary, Master George Tuberville, the Poet; Dr. Wilmington, English Physician to the Czar, and Grace, his beautiful and accomplished daughter. The author has displayed throughout considerable knowledge of human nature, and he especially excels in the portraiture of character. His research must have been very great, and his industry untiring. With his usual tact, he has availed himself of some of the poetical epistles which Tuberville wrote to his friends at home, descriptive of the manners and the people of Russia in that age, and transferred them to his pages. The result has been a work, which, purporting to be merely a book of entertainment, abounds in the most valuable and interesting information. The gambols of a monkey, an attaché of the English Embassy, the first animal of that kind ever seen in Muscovy, and an historical personage to boot, afford the reader considerable amusement.—*Glasgow Constitutional*.

WHATEVER else may be thought of this historical romance, it must, at any rate, be conceded to the writer, that he has taken up a new ground. Sufficiently read in the olden annals of Russia, he has adopted for his principal personage, if not his hero, the renowned Czar Ivan Vassilivitch, to whom our Elizabeth sent Sir Thomas Randolph on an embassy, accompanied by an accomplished secretary, Master Tuberville, and his suite increased by a still more accomplished and important personage (if we weigh him by the effects of his exploits,) in Jocko, a monkey; though we are not informed in what capacity he was appointed by Burleigh, the Pulmerston of that distant day. But, judging from the circumstances, and his memorable acts in support of the negotiation, it may be permitted us to lament that there is not in our own times a monkey attached to every one of our foreign embassies. The Muscovites mistook him for the foul fiend, and, certes, he proved himself a perfect Talleyrand: in short, it is not easy to see how our countrymen would ever have got back without his assistance, or to say what would have been the present state of the Russian empire, had it not been for the influence he exercised in the national affairs at that critical period. An English physician and his lovely daughter also figure in the scene; the rest are Russians from the czar to his lowest myrmidon—Czarevitches, Boyars, Boyarinas, patriarchs, priests, Cossacks, Opritchnina officers and soldiers, and other classes and varieties of the population.—*The Literary Gazette*.

THE mischievous mistake of falsifying history in works of fiction is so frequently committed, that we instinctively shrink from a work purporting to be a historical romance. In the general run, writers of fiction seem to be altogether unaware that they have no right to falsify the facts of history. New incidents, new characters, may be introduced *ad libitum* in works of imagination, provided they are such as harmonise with acknowledged truth: but on the other hand, historical personages and events, so far as they may be introduced, ought to be held sacred. And it is the praise due for acting thus which we feel the author of "The Czar" most fully entitled to claim. He has, in the first instance, made himself complete master of the terrible despot, the Czar Ivan Vassilivitch (contemporary of our Queen Elizabeth) and of his times; and then, upon the basis of, and perfectly harmonising with that history, he has raised a beautiful and imposing superstructure. The character of the Czar is boldly and powerfully drawn. That of the ruffian Maluta Skuratoff has great originality of conception, and contrasts admirably with the brave and high-souled Cossack leader, Koltzo, Sir Thomas Randolph, Queen

Elizabeth's ambassador—his young and gentle bride—his secretary Tuberville—Wilmington, the English physician—the Youthful Czarina, and several others, also very characteristically and effectively sketched. Nor must the renowned Jocko be forgotten, for, as in the various records of the reign of Ivan, he is here made to occupy a prominent position. Altogether, the narrative is written with power; it abounds with striking and touching incident. Another merit of the work is, the accuracy and graphic force with which the costume of the times, embracing their manners, customs, &c., is painted.

We have derived unusual pleasure from the perusal of "The Czar," and care not how soon we may again find ourselves associated with its author.—*The Naval and Military Gazette*.

THE "Czar" must be a standard novel. We perused the work with great interest.—*The Satirist*.

THE author has given us a vivid idea of the character of this Muscovite vagabond; and tracked him step by step as he descends into the abyss of guilt, with a skill and minuteness that prove him to be well acquainted with the leading-springs of action, and that subtle and perplexing mystery, the human heart. The main recommendation of the story, however, is the thorough knowledge which the author shows in every page, of the times of which he treats. Not only is he versed in the history of that period, but he is familiar also with its social and domestic peculiarities. His local descriptions too, especially of Moscow and its environs, wear the aspect of literal fidelity. From one or two hints thrown out casually in the course of his narrative, we gather that he has resided many years in Russia; has travelled through a considerable portion of that extensive empire," &c.—*The Sun, London, Friday, February 7, 1840*.

"WE were among the earliest to call attention to this powerfully written novel, which the *Times* in its criticism on it a few days ago, designated as 'a romance of the most startling character.' Though it contains much of the terrible, still it is the historical delineation of a Sovereign whose reign is as conspicuous in the annals of Russia for his own cruelties as it is for the results that flowed from his government. Upon the conquests that were made during his iron sway, the power of Peter the Great was established, the Muscovite Empire assumed its form and importance, and its rulers and subservient ministers imbued their policy with that sinuous finesse, which, from the days of Catherine to the dominion of Nicholas, has imposed upon surrounding nations the necessity of constant vigilance. Who is the foe that, like a coiled serpent, spreads darkly, blocking up the path to the onward progress of civilization? Is it not Russia—the same that has trampled into dust the rights of Poland, and who is battling now to trample the free-born warriors of the Caucasus beneath its feet, with a determination as cruel as Ivan ever displayed towards his subjects? The author of the 'Czar' has chosen a period unhacknied by the pen of the novelist; a period which will serve well for a starting-point of reflection and comparison to the English of what Russia was in its cradle, what were the modes of its political advancement, and finally what is the most fitting method to curb its arrogant aspirations after universal sway, and (to use a phrase of Napoleon) '*de trouver les moyens de refouler la Russie.*'"—*Second Notice, March 25*.

It is a romance of the most startling character.—*The Times*.

THE CZAR.

CHAPTER I.

“ Sometimes he would associate with thieves in a disguise, and once he advised them to rob the exchequer ; but one of the fellows up with his fist, and struck him a hearty good blow, saying, Thou rogue, wilt thou offer to rob his majesty who is so good to us ; let us go rob such a rich Boyar, who has cozened his majesty of vast sums. At this Ivan was well pleased, and at parting changed caps with the fellow, and bid him meet him next morning.”—COLLINS’ PRESENT STATE OF RUSSIA, 1671.

ABOUT a twelvemonth after that memorable invasion of the Khan of Crimea, who, at the head of a hundred thousand men, laid waste with fire and sword the provinces of Russia, and carried devastation into the heart of Moscow, the city began to recover something of its

former life and activity ; but it was long before every trace of that calamity was effaced.

“ The people,” says an eye-witness of the event, “ burning in their houses and streets, but most of all such as laboured to pass out of the gates farthest from the enemy, were meeting together in a mighty throng, and so pressing every man to prevent another, wedged themselves so fast within the gate and streets near unto it, as that three ranks walked one upon other’s head, the uppermost treading down those that were lower, so that there perished at that time by the fire and the presse, the number of 800,000 people or more.”

“ A sea of flame,” continues the historian, “ surrounded the city, and laid waste thirty miles or more of compass of habitation ;” whilst the streets, boarded after the fashion of the country, fed the flames, which circulated like rivers of fire.

The bright rays of a morning sun had, dur-

ing three hours, illumined the mighty city, with its thousand glittering cupolas and spires, and three hours more witnessed the destruction and dispersion of its crowded population, and its buildings levelled with the earth.

The Kremlin, surrounded by its rampart of stone, alone withstood the devouring element, the gates of which were walled up, and barred access to friend or foe; and the enemy having gazed upon the devastation from the neighbouring heights of Vorobieff, balked of their plunder, retraced their steps with more prudence, for in their homeward march they pillaged first and burnt afterwards.

Heaven's curse was still on the city of the Czar. The sovereign was the first to fly from the danger, leaving a mighty and devoted people to their fate; nor durst here turn until, by his orders, the dead bodies, heaped upon and amidst the ruins, were removed. But for this purpose sufficient hands were not to be found,

and the desolate site of the devoted city was visited by its second curse of pestilence. The rivers were choked with the masses of putrifying bodies which dammed up the currents of the Moskva and the Yaousa, flooding with their putrid waters the country around.

Moscow again appeared rising upon its ruins, and assuming a more commanding aspect. The suburbs, as before, were built of wood, but with a cautious style of structure, adequate spaces between the houses were left, so that under such another visitation, the destruction might be more promptly arrested. Within the boundary of the Kremlin, every building was constructed of freestone. The palace itself assumed that outline which was to be sacrificed at a future day to the salvation of the empire, when the flames of extermination should be kindled, a voluntary holocaust to the invaders of Russia. The city now took a larger circuit. The homes of the more opulent were graced with enclosures

of land, which were laid out in gardens. Along the banks of the Yaousa, the cottages assumed much the aspect of the more modern villas, whilst the mansions of the great were elevated with a grotesque mixture of the Asiatic and the Teutonic styles of architecture. Fifty thousand separate dwellings constituted, in a very brief space of time, the new city.

It was at an early stage of these improvements when Moscow

“ Rose like Antæus prouder from its fall,”

that, at a little kabak, or cantine, at one of the gates of the new boundary of the city, a group of very uninteresting-looking beings were seated around the drinking, or tap-room, along the benches fixed to the wall. But however unprepossessing to the general eye, mine host acknowledged, with the utmost obsequiousness, the honour conferred upon him by his guests, as he promptly replenished every goblet with

the pure, and, as he lustily swore, unadulterated vodka.

“Thou art a sad scoundrel, Slopsky,” said a half-muddled Tartar-looking rogue, with eyes somewhere about that part of the head where Christians usually wear their eyebrows.

“Thank your honour,” said Slopsky.

“Thou froth of a heathen,” continued this doubtful personage, “there was a time when thou wouldst deny me a pint of quass, unless I held up a polani.”

“They were hard times, your honour.”

“Hard!” ejaculated a lean-shanked, bleary-eyed sot; “well, Tunbelly, since we have done thee the charity to soften them, thou shalt now stand treat to the company.”

The bloated visage of Slopsky underwent a sudden change, and its jolly rotundity became fearfully lengthened.

“Bumpers round!” shouted a score of gentlemen of the same stamp.

“Medonia for me,” said another, whose blood-shot eyes spoke of debauchery and excess.

“Saint Nicholas defend us!” ejaculated the host, with a supplicating voice, “not all the pots, barrels, and quass, of my cellars could purchase for such a party a single bumper round of medonia.”

“Thou lying varlet,” exclaimed one who had remained silent and apparently abstracted; “forth with the medonia, else will we tap this wine skin, this ambulatory hogshead of thine, old wine-bibber.” And, suiting the action to the word, the shining blade of a carving knife was pointed to that part of Slopsky’s person, where the threat would have been most successfully executed.

The voice alone of this personage acted as a powerful charm on the nerves of Slopsky; and a secret conviction that no threat from those lips had ever been an idle one, rendered the

naked exposure of such an instrument of bloodshed quite unnecessary, and he flew with an earnestness to obey, in which he quite belied the surmise that he had once had his heels split for some unlawful peccadillo, by the administrators of grace and justice of his Czarine majesty.

“ Ha ! ha ! ha ! ” shouted the elegant company, at the effect produced by the commanding tones of the hero of the carving knife. And assuredly there was a marked deference paid to this personage, not by any distinguished title, not by any refined phraseology, or marked compliment, but by a respectful silence when he spoke, an instant attention to his commands by zealous performance of duty, and by that blind submission to a superior, which the Russian imbibes almost with his mother’s milk ; such was the respect and obedience exhibited by this rough corps towards the chief of their party.

Time was, when Maluta Skuratoff was seen a

tattered wretch, soliciting alms in the lanes of the ancient city; but he had risen from his rags, like the metropolis from its ashes; he had cast off the laptie or bark-shoes, for the buskins of Astrakan.

“The medonia, gentlemen,” exclaimed Slopsky, in a dolorous tone, as he entered with a tankard, and the honest earnings of a weary life.

“Then ’tis time they should be treasured in a less ungodly receptacle. Here’s health and long life to Father Slopsky,” said Maluta Skuratoff; and he drained a horn cup of sparkling medonia. Then turning the empty vessel topsy-turvy on his head, to prove that none remained, it was a signal to follow his example. Bumpers were filled around. Maluta, however, preserved his seat before the small square light-hole of the kabak, and his eyes were now more and more impatiently directed towards the gates of the city.

“ And thou sayest, worthy Slopsky, this friend of thine hath matter for our ears ? ”

“ Aye, that hath he, friends. He has access to the best mansions in the city, and can lead you to treasures that can make Boyars of you in wealth, and a man of me, so you continue to favour my poor house. ”

“ And think you we may trust him ? ”

“ Verily do I ; and this will I say for him, more than I can say for all of you, he does not require trust ; witness this Hungarian ducat on account, though a grivna would have paid his scot. ”

“ Is it so, friend ? then will we scrape acquaintance. What presence hath thy honourable friend ? ”

“ Truth, to say a most ill-omened countenance ; a very thief-looking phiz. ”

“ No personalities, Slopsky ; but see, thou art wanted—’tis perhaps thy friend, for ’tis about the time he was to have been here. ”

The landlord having made his exit to reconnoitre, soon re-appeared, leading in the expected guest.

The stranger was clad in the mean apparel of a mujik. A greasy sheep-skin shoub over a filthy caftan, leggings bandaged with thongs, and laptie, or shoes of bark, completed his attire. Before he addressed the company, he made profound obeisance to a picture lighted up in a corner of the room.

“Thou art welcome,” was the familiar recognition of the landlord; “I was but now speaking in thy behalf to these worthies.”

“Health, my portly friend,” answered the new-comer; “are these thy trusty patrons, worthy Slopsky?”

“They labour in the good cause, Ivasko.—But truce to idle words—I have forewarned them, friend, of thy capabilities. The further explanation do I leave to thee. The captain lends a ready ear to thy proposition.”

Meanwhile, Maluta Skuratoff had made silent, but close, observation, and was taking a cautious survey of the stranger.

“And now, sirrah!” quoth Maluta Skuratoff, “I am told that thou canst lead us to treasure.”

“Aye,” interpolated the landlord; “give him but proof that ye have as bold hearts as ye have lungs to swear it, and he will lead ye to mines of wealth, such as the Cossack outlaw Yermack is said to have discovered in the bowels of the Oural.”

“What sayest thou to the Czar’s exchequer?” whispered the new-comer.

“Thou mongrel of an unbaptized caitiff!” exclaimed Maluta Skuratoff, as he started from his seat, and with a blow sent their new acquaintance staggering to the further end of the room. “The Czar’s exchequer! thou son of Satan! thou heathen! didst lay a finger on aught pertaining to him, I would cleave

thee to the chine—s'death! owe we not our wealth, our lives, to the good Ivan Vassilivitch? And thou wouldst have us rob our benefactor?"

The goodly company responded with acclamation to the enthusiasm of their leader.

Ivasko, the stranger, was somewhat discomfited by this rude reception; but recovering his equanimity, calmly replied,—

“Thou shouldst have heard me out. I said his majesty’s exchequer, for there are fraudulent officers about our good prince who have appropriated some share of his treasury, and ’tis to this portion of it I would introduce ye.”

“Now!—that alters the case, good Ivasko, and I feel that I have wronged thee—thy hand!”

“Aye! aye! thou wast to blame, Maluta,” observed Slopsky.

“Well, here I make atonement,” answered Maluta. Long life to the prince, the friend of

the industrious !” and he drained a bumper of the goodly liquor.

The toast was received with appropriate applause.

“Come Ivasko, wilt not drink with us? I say long life to Ivan Vassilivitch !”

“Well! I have no objection: ‘long life to him.’ Thou saidst, my friend, it was of a private nature—the property?”

“Aye! what thinkst thou of the chancellor of the exchequer?”

“That were to guess that he had hoarded something that might stand between him and his conscience,” rejoined Slopsky.

“Then will we unburthen him,” said Maluta. “So Ivasko reckon on our aid—the day? the hour?”

“The Englisher—this envoy from the islanders—is now within some few versts of Moscow. To-morrow doth he make his entry, and the Czar receives him in state. The officers of

the crown will be on duty, and this conscience-burthened chancellor, whom we would relieve, will be safe for some hours in his master's presence. I am but a menial there in my capacity; but show thyself with thy trusty followers, and in one hour shall ye be more enriched than if ye had plundered the wealth of the Gastinoi Dvor."

"By Heaven, we will!"

"And be the pass-word Ivasko! which when thou hearest, follow him who speaks."

"Right well devised! Now touching the share of the booty?"

"Secure it first? the lion's share is for the bravest."

"Thy pledge."

"My cap I exchange with thee."

"Good," said Maluta Skuratoff; and doffing their covering, these newly-made friends parted.

CHAPTER II.

" A beast that was of Scrop's brood,
 Whome of a man, Jobe, in his irefull moode,
 Detesting his deceitfull guile, did make
 So foule a beast, that no man could him take
 T' have been a man, yet was it with such skill,
 That being a beast, a man he favoured still."

THE BEGGER'S APE.

" Ses bottines sont couvertes de perles et de pierreries"
 (dress of the Czar).—RELATION DE LA MOSCOVIE, 1687, p. 49.

ADJOINING the Kremlin, stood then, and stands now, the most ancient church in Moscow. Spas-na-Boiu, for it was so styled, was then on a level with the palace, although it had somewhat sunk from its original altitude. It was still, however, far more imposing than at the present time, for now it has sunk much deeper, and steps lead down, instead of up, as

formerly, to the venerable pile. "And when," says an orthodox Muscovite, "time shall have levelled it with the earth, the end of the world shall be."

Long since, the vaults and catacombs, arranged in numerous windings beneath the ponderous edifice, have been closed up in its gradual descent for ever. But time was that a pilgrimage was often made to that subterraneous abode of saints, and led by an acolyte, whose torch lit up the mansions of the dead, the living penitent would leave the offering at the shrine of sanctity. A narrow pathway led from niche to niche, where gathered to their forefathers, yet robed as the living, many a group of mummy-withered relics were packed side by side, and a narrow grating alone divided the quick from the dead. As if thrust upon their unwilling keeping, every crevice, every nook, and narrow rack, was laden with gold, silver, and copper. Nor did ever sacrilegious

hand grasp at those riches, though of ready access to the continual influx of devotees was the vaulted labyrinth. In the circuitous windings, which to the uninitiated appeared endless, the excavations and niches for the dead were of various dimensions. Occasionally a doorway seemed to forbid inspection, and, in that retreat of the ever-silent tenant, whose spirit was the guest of another world, there was something more awe-inspiring than in the more exposed sepulchres. There was mystery—a silence that seemed to render death more imposing, by thus raising up an impenetrable barrier to the gaze of the living.

An experienced guide now led the way. As he descended the steps, he was followed, one by one, by about a score of unwonted visitors. By their outward garb, the reader would recognise the guests of the kabak; but now their boisterous mirth was repressed—the reckless effrontery of the robber was subdued, and but one of

all that dauntless band betrayed no symptoms of reverence and fear. That one was Maluta Skuratoff, the leader of that licentious troop. The torch-bearer, who had led them on to the scheme of daring plunder they were now bent upon, as he progressed, was seen to lose the firmness of his grasp, and the torch trembled in his hand. Maluta Skuratoff snatched it from him.

“Never fear, brother! pshaw! Those speechless lips and sightless eyes seem to unman ye! forward! and fear not—wouldst thou share the fate of that noseless priest, stuck up in that niche, whose face was somewhat shorn of its most prominent beauty by our goodly Czar!”

“I remember me the prince was in a merry mood on that occasion. What then! had he not a right to his own? the slave’s soul to God, his body to the prince. ’Tis a spacious dwelling this,” continued Maluta, who had, on this

occasion, all the conversation to himself, for his comrades, crossing themselves as they passed each successive tenement of the dead, followed silently and devoutly; and to their honour be it said, the heaps of gold and silver, allotted by devotees to the saints, were passed by untouched.

“ ’Tis a spacious dwelling,” continued Skuratoff; “ and I warrant ye, for so large a community, there is less quarrelling than in any other mansion of Moscow.”

At this pass, their new friend, who had tottered on, seemingly unnerved, stopped before a flight of steps. Here cautioning them to be silent, and ascending the steps, he stopped before a low door. Pressing a hidden spring it gave way, and they entered a small chapel. Here he bade them wait, and making his exit at an opposite door, fastened it on the outside.

Whilst we leave this goodly company to await their release from the sanctuary where they were now confined, having led the reader through

the subterranean passages within the Kremlin, we now beg to introduce him to fresh air and better company.

Truly regal was the splendour with which the barbarian Czar was surrounded, when policy permitted the approach of a stranger. He was arrayed for the occasion in a purple robe, the costly velvet of which was scarcely discernible through the closely set pearls with which it was studded. Upon a skull cap of Siberian sable reposed his crown. Brilliants of uncommon magnitude profusely adorned it. A large emerald, encrusted in the centre, estimated at that day at 40,000 roubles, threw a dazzling lustre around him. The weighty sceptre he changed from hand to hand was refulgent with diamonds. The throne was raised three steps from the ground, and the regal seat was supported by four blocks of massive silver, the arms of which were the necks of two silver eagles. The wall at his back was decorated with an image of a

saint set in gold. On the right of the throne, a few paces off, upon a pedestal of silver curiously wrought, was a ewer and basin of fine gold, and a napkin, wherewith to remove the impurity of kissing hands by a Heathen or a Roman Catholic, from the sacred person of his majesty. The chamber of reception was quadrangular, and richly carpeted. The ceiling was exquisitely painted and gilded, and displayed, in glowing colours, striking passages from Holy Writ. Upon benches all round, a hundred Boyars were seated and covered. Their caps of black wolf-skin, and their robes of cloth of gold richly embroidered. Right and left of the throne were four youths, beautiful in person, of the highest rank, dressed in white damask robes and buskins. Their caps were of leopard skin; and each wore a heavy chain of gold round the neck, falling gracefully to the waist. Each held a silver hatchet suspended, as if prepared to strike. At the entrance, a multitude

of councillors and other dignitaries were in waiting; and foremost of these were the ever facetious buffoons of the Czar.

The prince himself was in a mood of no ordinary kind. The embassy about to appear, had been preceded by most unwelcome tidings from the illustrious Elizabeth of England, and the purport of her communication had left disappointment and resentment rankling in the breast of Ivan.

When a late violent insurrection had nearly hurled him from the throne, the despot's misgivings made him secretly endeavour to secure a refuge in the dominions of the Queen of Great Britain. The wily Elizabeth bestowed every mark of courtesy on the barbarian's envoy, in order to secure to the commerce of her kingdom all the advantage which an intercourse with Russia could offer. But when the Czar had set his heart upon the possession of an English wife, and ventured to address the independent

mistress of England herself, she dexterously sought to make overtures of sending him, in her stead, her own niece, Mary Hastings, sister of the Earl of Huntingdon. The English sovereign and her ladies were meanwhile informed of the unrestrained privilege of divorce exercised by the barbarian Czar. She revolted at the sacrifice of her amiable kinswoman to the arms of a tyrant, regardless of ties human or divine, and evaded the promise unfortunately given, upon the plea of the reluctance of the damsel's family to lose her society. It was vain to seek to appease the Czar. The eloquence of the ablest diplomatist could not, in that age, impress the Muscovites with any notion of the independence of British subjects. Fearful was the anticipation of the interview of Sir Thomas Randolph with his infuriated majesty.

In a country where, to a much later period, female education was totally neglected, and where, in the government census, women

were not admitted in the enumeration of souls, the Czar might find a sufficient apology for not comprehending that woman had a will of her own. Happy, indeed, is that state of society in which the virtues of the sex, exercised within the sphere for which they were created, receive the homage due to them; where the wilder passions of man become softened and subdued beneath the gentle influence, and confiding and enduring love of woman; and where her more lively and creative imaginations and quick perceptions are improved and brought out by suitable education, so that she becomes a help meet for man.

Not such were the Russian fair in the times of which we write. Though subdued by the will of the stronger sex, subjected to his brutality and ignorance, narrowed in her sphere of action as God's rational offspring, guided only by the light of nature, and habituated to insult and suffering, the Russian matron still shone

out the solace of those she loved, in affliction, the disinterested and generous friend of all who stood in need of offices of kindness.

The honeymoon of a Russian bride was her short-lived period of elevation; uninformed, and meek in spirit, obedient to the will of the lord of her person, she sank at once to the level of the slave, so soon as her virgin charms had lost their syren-like spell of fascination, and the almost Asiatic seclusion imposed upon her, was embittered by the jealousy of her jailer.

The day appointed for the entry of the British ambassador into the city of Moscow dawned auspiciously, for in the night the snow had disappeared, and it might truly be said,

“ Winter was, and summer is;”

for the warm sun glowed with ardent splendour, and bathed in light the thousand glittering cupolas of the churches of Moscow. At break of day the bells were in motion, and their incre-

dible number (if we may trust existing records, which compute the churches at more than 4000, with their complement of bells), must have created an astonishing din. Every citizen was afoot, and in holiday attire. The streets swarmed with multitudes moving to one point, the gate through which the ambassador was to enter.

It was the policy of Ivan to dazzle with the gathered splendours of his court, the ministers of foreign princes; and, as if his subjects entered into his views, individual display was not neglected by the meanest slave. In truth, it was a show of magnificence rarely, if ever, equalled. The glittering uniforms of the soldiery, the costly dress of the Boyars, and the sumptuous habiliments of the household of the Czar, offered a *coup d'œil* on these occasions, unequalled then, and not surpassed since.

The great men of the empire advanced like

an army to the encounter of the foreigner, about half a mile outside the gates.

Sir Thomas Randolph, the representative of England's Queen, accompanied by a numerous retinue on horseback, halted on their approach, and dismounted, as did the officers of the Czar, the chief of whom thus addressed him:—

“The Grand Duke Ivan Vassilivitch, by the grace of God, Czar, and Lord of all Russia, has commanded us to inquire after the health of his sister, Elizabeth, Queen of Great Britain, and would learn if you have travelled in safety.”

Right nobly did the ambassador return them courteous answer; whereupon the speaker continued:—

“His majesty sends from his own stables a horse caparisoned for thy use, and also others for thy suite.”

Hereupon the ambassador was invited to mount a richly-caparisoned steed, and the cortège then advanced towards the city, reinforced

by the servants of the Czar, and forming a company apparelled most sumptuously.

An immense concourse of people lined the way. First came Sir Thomas, having on his right and left the principal officers of the crown, reining his charger with distinguished grace, and wearing a noble dignity of demeanour, which prepossessed beholders in favour of his country.

Then followed George Tuberville, his secretary, mounted on a steed of beautiful proportions, and though of delicate appearance, yet seeming to comport himself with consequence. Then came a train of household servants of Sir Thomas, right hearty-looking Englishmen ; and amidst them, mounted on a palfrey, and somewhat grotesquely equipped, an object that drew forth the whole attention of the multitude. A serving man led the horse, which the rider, who was of very diminutive size, seemed not powerful enough to master. His features wore an

exceeding gravity, and with much dignity did he affect the stateliness of the occasion. And when Sir Thomas Randolph did make acknowledgment of the courteous salutations of the people, then did this personage of his suite, with solemn guise, lift his bonnet and bend himself, as did his master, the ambassador.

We will not say that such impression made he as did Sir Thomas, for there was something like a grinning and laughter in the crowd; and when he had uncovered to them, it wrought no change in their demeanour, but the rather more uncontrollable became their merriment.

“Didst ever see,” said a mujik to his comrade, “a more ill-favoured urchin?”

“Nay,” observed he, “how he squats upon his horse! St. Nicholas befriend us. He is a heretic!”

“Ay, that’s some consolation.”

“The most hideous pigmy I ever beheld.”

At that moment of exultation, some one threw

aloft his cap, in testimony of his admiration of the gorgeous pageant, whereupon the dwarfish ill-favoured rider tossed his also in the air.

The dignity of the whole embassy was compromised by this frivolous proceeding; and the multitude, seized with the spirit for ridicule, now pressed most inconveniently upon the cavalcade, which, for a few minutes, was arrested in its progress.

It was at this moment that the remarkable personage alluded to was observed to stoop upon his horse, and to snatch the hat of his horse's guide, with which he very demurely covered himself. But, in the act of bending forward, an appendage which obtruded from behind, was most undeniably witnessed then and there, and a wild tumultuous shout, "The devil, the devil," resounded on all sides, and the cavalcade was enabled to advance without further inconvenience, so suddenly had the rabble betaken themselves to flight.

The long train of the embassy now reached the gates of the city. There followed the dignitaries already mentioned, a train of servants on horseback, bearing the presents of the royal Elizabeth to the Czar.

First rode one, carrying, on a crimson velvet cushion, two rich pieces of cloth of tissue.

The next was bearer of a fine piece of scarlet; then others with violet and azure cloth.

Another supported a pair of brigandines, with murrians, of exquisite workmanship. Others again, in like formality, carried basins, ewers, and flagons of gold, of rare design and workmanship.

These were again followed by a huge cage, drawn by eight horses, containing a male and female lion.

The cannon from the Kremlin announced the approach of the British ambassador; and such was the hubbub of the ringing of bells, and the sound of trumpets, that the like was seldom heard.

Alighting at the court of the palace, some distance from the steps, where it was the privilege of the Czar alone to dismount, and proceeding on foot across the grand square of the Kremlin, where the body-guard of the despot, in coats of mail, and glittering with costly armour, were arrayed, Sir Thomas Randolph, followed by his secretary and principal officers, ascended the steps of the palace.

The Boyars, right and left, lined the entrances, apparelled in cloth of gold, and ushered him into the presence of the Czar.

Imposing was the effect of that august assembly, and the ambassador felt a secret awe before the throned autocrat.

The officer appointed to receive the credentials, and to introduce the ambassador, enumerated the presents, and proclaimed the name and rank of the ambassador of Elizabeth, Queen of England.

On hearing the title of the British Queen, the

Czar rose from his seat ; at the same instant, the assembled Boyars, who had hitherto remained covered, took off their kolpacks. The Czar extended his hand ; and when Sir Thomas had received the customary honour, a basin and napkin were brought to the autocrat, to remove the impurities of contact with the heretic from the Greek Church.

At length, after the courtly formalities were passed, Sir Thomas Randolph and his secretary were commanded to dine with his majesty on the following day, and then suffered to repair to the hotel appropriated to the embassy.

CHAPTER III.

“ A la porte du chateau, mais hors de ses murailles, du coté du midi, se void la belle eglise, dediée à la Ste. Trinité, & communément appellée, Jerusalem. Quand elle fut achevée le tyran Ivan Basilowitz trouva son batiment si magnifique qu’il fit crever les yeux à l’architecte, afin qu’il ne fit plus de batiment qui put être mis en parallele avec celui-ci.”—ADAM OLEARIUS. VOYAGE DE MOSCOVIE.

“ Il revetit Feodoroff des ornemens royaux, &c.—il lui enfonce un poignard dans le cœur.—La femme de cet infortuné fut egalement égorgée.—KARAMSIN, HIST. DE RUSSIE, tom. ix., p. 123.

WE turn to the archives of Kings—those records that come down to us loaded with the posthumous fame or disgrace of the short-lived rulers of nations, and these present a summary of the acts of the Cæsar of the North, from which the reader may form an unbiassed judgment of the character of this terrible scourge of his country.

A minor when he succeeded to the throne,

the vitiated education he had received from the agents of the crown, sowed deeply the seeds of crime. His first Empress, endowed with every amiable virtue, held in check his dormant vices. But death brought a premature term to her influence, and the nation that mourned her loss could not yet divine all that descended to the tomb with the virtuous Czarina. For here terminated the happiness of Ivan and of Russia; as from the day on which he lost his wife, he abandoned the path of virtue.

Once, when dragged by the last stage of sickness to the verge of the tomb, and all hope of his recovery had fled, when surrounded by his former slaves, men who held their breath at his single word, now despising his authority, as if he were then deceased, and refusing his last wishes; he was compelled to implore his few remaining friends, to preserve, by flight, the lives and honour of his wife and son. The faculties of the Czar were overcome; he saw

vanish before him, for ever, the flattering hopes which animated and supported him in a virtuous career. And when, by one of those miracles of nature, a crisis arrived, at once operating towards a complete cure, he rose from that bed of sickness, a fiend in human shape.

But the exterminator slumbered a while. The unsuspecting Boyars again relied on the apparent confidence he seemed to repose, as usual, on his former friends; but his clemency was an effort, and when the last blow to his happiness was given, by the death of his beloved Czarina, no tie, human or divine, restrained him; for man had robbed him of confidence, and Heaven, recalling his adored wife, had severed the link between Ivan and virtue.

The fears of Ivan, in the mean time, left him no repose. Dark suspicion and wrath increased daily in his breast. The most faithful of his nobles appeared, in his eyes, the secret partisans of his enemies. Their sorrowful looks seemed

to him to betray perfidious projects ; his guilty conscience made him interpret their silence into reproach and menaces. He waited only a fit opportunity to sacrifice them to his cruel suspicions.

All at once the Czar determined to quit Moscow. He assembled at the Kremlin a great number of sledges, in which were placed gold, silver, images, crosses, precious vases, and money. With these he set out, accompanied by his sons, and also by Alexis Basmanoff, and other favourites. He proceeded to the slobode Alexandroffsky ; whence he sent a letter to the metropolitan, complaining of the seditions, disorders, and crimes, of the government of the Boyars, and of the importunities of the clergy. He stated his determination to give up the government, and to retire to wherever Providence might lead him. The publishing of this letter caused a general consternation in Moscow. " The Czar abandons us," they cried ; " we are

lost. Who will defend us against the attacks of our enemies? How can the sheep remain without a shepherd? Let him punish the seditious and all conspirators. Has he not a right over our lives? We will present our heads to him; we will prostrate our bodies before him," &c. Such was the language of Russians at that epoch. They had placed over themselves an idol, to which they paid the most abject submission. The commands of the Almighty were less regarded than those of their Czar. The word of his mouth saved or destroyed. The necks of thousands bent to meet the sword of the executioners of the Czar without a murmur. Their estates, their wealth, were at his disposal; their wives and daughters his property, to take or to return at his good pleasure.

Has he not freed us from the Tartar yoke? And the good people of Moscow exulted at the remembrance that Ivan was the first of the Czars who had not crouched to the Great Khan.

For many yet lived who had seen his predecessor stoop to the envoy of the Tartar, bound by a solemn oath to feed the steed of the servant of the Khan out of his own ducal cap. Ivan Vassilivitch had delivered his country from this ignominious acknowledgment of vassalage, and his subjects were grateful.

Ivan, at their earnest prayers, consented to continue to hold the sceptre, on condition that he should be at perfect liberty to punish traitors by death, exile, or confiscation of estate, without being annoyed by the importunities and intercessions of the clergy. He made his solemn entry into Moscow, and convened his nobility, to whom he proposed the establishment of the legion of the Opritchnina for his own personal security.

Such was the origin of the reign of these proud and devastating soldiers !

This body of men soon became so numerous as to form an army rather than a body-guard,

and enjoyed privileges of an extraordinary nature and extent. Lands and districts were appropriated for their maintenance; whole streets around the palace were given to them as permanent residences. Their uniforms and equipments were of the most splendid kind; their horses of the finest breed, gorgeously caparisoned.

So far from the ranks of this legion being filled by men of family or character, they were entirely composed of desperadoes, whose only recommendation was a blind obedience and devotion to the monarch, to whom they made oath, that in obeying his orders, and in defending his person, and those of the Czarina and his children, they would sacrifice every other human tie, and every other human duty. Thus surrounded by the ready instruments of his will, the Czar bestowed upon them unlimited favour.

The Opritchnina rapidly increased in numbers, pride, insolence, cruelty, and rapacity. The Czar had already given up to them, as a reward

for their entire devotion and servility to him, not only the lands, but even the well-furnished houses of 4000 proprietors, many of whom bore wounds, received in fighting their sovereign's battles, and were now driven forth, with their wives and children, to remote and desert places. The soldiers of this vile and detestable legion could oppress and pillage their neighbours with impunity. The judges durst not give sentence against them. To offer an offensive word to his privileged guard, was to offer insult to the Czar himself.

For a time Ivan shut himself up in a fortified palace of the slobode, or suburb, Alexandroffsky. Here his folly carried him to the extraordinary length of forming a sort of monastic brotherhood, amongst his favourites of the new legion. He gave the name of brothers to 300 of these cut-throats, took the title of abbot himself, and constituted Prince Athanase Viazemsky treasurer. Having given them hoods

and black cassocks, under which they wore military dresses resplendent with gold, and embellished with furs of sable, he formed rules for the convent, and gave himself the example of strict observance to them. After spending the morning in strict religious performances, the whole fraternity dined luxuriantly, and, as if to indemnify themselves for the morning's abstinence, as if they had, by the morning's mummery, obtained a licence for the night's debauch, as if they had, by mere forms, cold repetitions, and heartless professions, squared accounts with their God, they gave a loose to wine and jollity. Sometimes the Czar would leave the banquet, and, flushed with excess, would visit the prisons, to be an eye-witness of the torture inflicted by his order on his victims, and would then return with a complacent and satisfied look to rejoin his boon companions. Sometimes, whilst employed in singing the service of matins, or during that of the mass, this monster would

give orders for the most sanguinary executions.

And sometimes, in disguise, he would visit the purlieus of the city, steal into the confidence of his unwary subjects, and register their unguarded words with the sentence of death.

Such was the sovereign of Russia, Ivan, surnamed the Terrible and the Threatener. In person he was tall and well made, with high shoulders, muscular arms, a broad chest, handsome hair, long mustachios, an aquiline nose, small, but brilliant and fiery, grey eyes; and upon the whole, a countenance *once* pleasing. At this time, however, he was changed, so as to be scarcely recognised for the same being. A dark ferocity was settled on his countenance, distorted by the furious passions which dwelt within, forming a hell from which he could not escape. His head had now become almost bald, and his beard reduced to a few hairs.

An imposing magnificence surrounded him on occasions of state. Asiatic and European splendour combined to enhance his dignity, and shed a lustre round his throne unequalled in that day.

The British ambassador, when he retired from the imposing presence of the monarch and his court, dazzled with the effect of such grandeur, was further pleased to find that the munificence of the Czar equalled the pomp of his throne; and the household of Sir Thomas Randolph were highly gratified with the noble and daily provision of a hundred loaves of bread, a quarter of a bullock, four sheep, twelve fowls, two geese, and an allowance of fivepence daily for light and sundries, besides an unlimited supply of Spanish wine, beer, hydromel, and brandy; whilst a *desetin* (or body of ten men) kept constant guard at the gates of the hotel.

Majestic and reserved, when the representa-

tives of his allies came into his presence, Ivan saw them depart impressed with high notions of his grandeur, prudence, and justice. Such were the only occasions of restraint upon the despot. And, as if the forbearance had been too long for endurance, the humour in which it left him was not favourable to the objects of his hatred or jealousy. As Sir Thomas retired, the remembrance of Queen Elizabeth's refusal of his hand, which the presence of her ambassador had brought up, revived his feeling of disappointment, and he looked round upon his Boyars for a victim on whom to wreak his vengeance.

The Czarevitch, his beloved and *worthy* son, was seated on a lower grade of the throne. The Princes Viazemsky and Gvozdoff, the Boyar Basmanoff, his son, Feodor Basmanoff, the grand cup-bearer, and Boyar Feodoroff, one of the few remaining unsullied dignitaries of the throne, stood near the monarch.

There was a dead silence in the whole court. Not a breath disturbed the mood of the monarch. At length, suddenly summoning the younger Basmanoff, he pointed to a small door leading from the hall to the private chapel of the palace.

The order seemed to be perfectly understood by him to whom it was addressed, and the rest looked in wonder upon each other, which was in no degree abated, when a band of rude and beggarly vagabonds were now ushered by young Basmanoff into the presence of the Czar.

The autocrat was observed to smile at the awkward deportment of the strange guests of the palace, who, transfixed and paralysed with the dazzling splendour around them, stood in speechless wonder.

For a while he kept them in suspense, his eye fixed upon the tallest and most robust of the gang, as if he knew him; it was Maluta Skuratoff, the robber chief, and his followers,

he who had pledged himself to aid in plundering the chancellor of the exchequer.

“ Our Chancellor Feodoroff,” drawled out the Czar, in a tone that alarmed the grey-haired Boyar, though the eye of the monarch was still steadfastly fixed upon the robber, who, at the first sound of that voice, was startled——

“ Our Chancellor Feodoroff, an interest in thy weal hath induced us to provide for the safety of the revenue committed to thy charge, for know, these miscreants did contemplate purloining the treasury of thy master——”

“ That do I solemnly deny,” boldly protested Maluta; “ all I pledged myself to do, was to relieve the chancellor of such wealth only as he had purloined in the honest performance of the duties of his office——”

“ So, brother,” quickly interrupted the Czar, as the old Boyar advanced to speak, “ the thief is nearer home than thou didst suppose ourself had cognizance. *Thou* must needs conspire

against us with the Polish king, and fill thy coffers with the wealth of the foreigner. But we will shorten the way to the throne for thee," said Ivan, with a calm voice, as he descended the steps.

"First place we in thy hand our royal sceptre."

Feodoroff mechanically took it.

"The crown with our own hands we place upon thy head."

Instinctively the old Boyar felt that his last hour was come, and with a firmness which did not belie the laurels he had won in battle, received the diadem with undaunted resignation, and, as he was desired, seated himself upon the throne.

The despot now advanced, and prostrated himself before the throned Boyar, saying,

"I salute thee, oh mighty Czar of Russia! Thou now receivest from me the honour to which thou didst aspire. But if I have the

power thus to make thee a sovereign, I have also the power of thus precipitating thee from the throne.”

As he finished these words, he buried his dagger in the old man’s heart.

Some of the assistants shuddered, and the English physician, Walter Wilmington, received the expiring old man in his arms. When the body was removed, the Czar resumed his seat.

“Stand forth, Maluta Skuratoff.” The bandit boldly advanced.

“What say ye, Voyvodes and Boyars, great dignitaries of holy Russia? How shall we deal with these new guests?”

“The wheel,” intimated the Prince Viazemsky.

“The rack,” said Basmanoff the elder.

“The stake,” advised the Czarevitch.

“Have mercy,” expostulated the Czar, in a supplicating tone. “Why, ye would have me prove a very butcher. What! is it because I

have sent to his account a daring traitor, I am to adjudge an ignominious death to an honest man?"

"Harkye! worthy Boyars. This brave man was, but last night, offered inducement to break into our palace, and rob your prince; and I have evidence that thereupon he did inflict deserved punishment upon the tempter, and in lieu thereof, did make common cause with us to detect the villany of our rebel Feodoroff. Is it not so, Maluta Skuratoff?"

The person so addressed now recognised in the Czar the stranger who, the preceding night, had bargained with him to pilfer the coffers of the ex-treasurer, and for the first time identified Ivasko (the diminutive name for Ivan), with the terrible autocrat, and bent himself to the ground.

"Thy conduct hath deserved our requital. What wouldst thou do to serve thy prince?"

“What life and limb can do. I have no kindred; none to love, or reverence, or fear, but thee; none who have bent upon me a look of complacency, who hath spoken to me the words of encouragement and hope, but thee. Then speak but the word, my prince, and should all the world be in arms against thee, yet will I fearlessly contend with it to the death.”

“What have we here?” observed the Czar, as he remarked a body of the clergy entering the hall.

“It is, my gracious lord,” answered Viazemsky, “the architect of the new church dedicated to the Holy Trinity; he waits, with the priests, to invite your majesty to be present at the consecration.”

“So, sirrah,” said the Czar, when the architect had approached the foot of the throne, “thy work is now completed. We have observed its progress, and we like the whole.

Thou hast excelled thyself. The nave, the portico, the cupolas, are all in exquisite keeping, and good proportions."

The architect, the son of science, the aspirant to fame, was subdued by the praise of his sovereign. For many weary years he had toiled, and the goal was won. The edifice was the deserved admiration of the metropolis, and his noble emulation was now banquetted with the eulogium of the Czar, and his heart swelled with delightful and noble feelings.

"How wouldst thou be rewarded?" said Ivan, as he looked graciously upon the architect.

"I have one wish, my lord. It is to visit countries where the arts have triumphed; there to acquire, by study and application, such excellence as shall befit me for further employment of your majesty."

"Pshaw! is not thy fame secured to thee? What more dost need? The work thou hast

accomplished will be a lasting memorial of thy art. A pension we assign thee, but we will not suffer thee to adorn another city with thy rare accomplishment." Then turning to his physician, who stood at a little distance,—“Wilmington, we would have thee to take from our architect the gift of sight, lest he do play us truant, and erect, mayhap, in foreign cities, sunk in heresy or infidelity, such another temple.”

A tremor came over the frame of the poor architect as he heard the sentence. The wretched man's hopes were blasted for ever.

The physician at first hesitated to answer, but Ivan reiterated his command.

“Czar,” he replied, “in my hired capacity of physician to your person, I came to relieve, not to inflict, suffering; to restore, and not to deprive human beings of the blessings of life. The command is not within the compass of my duty.”

Ivan frowned. The example of disobedience was what he dreaded most. Surveying the assembly, his eye rested again upon Maluta.

“ We put thy professions to the test. Do thou my bidding.” With one hand Skuratoff seized the trembling architect; the other, armed with a sharp instrument, quickly performed its revolting office, and the “ life of light” of the miserable architect passed for ever, almost as quickly as the eyes of the court were turned to witness the deed.

Walter Wilmington led away the mutilated architect, to sooth the sufferer with the cunning of his art; whilst the Czar and his company, wrapt in admiration at the gigantic strength and butcher-like skill of Maluta, had forgotten the victim of science.

That day Maluta Skuratoff was invested with a high rank in the Legion of the Opritchnina, and the remainder of his promising corps were enrolled in the same service.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Ha per costume di far fare una scelta delle donzelle di tutto 'l regno, e comanda, che le piu virtuose, e le più belle gli siano condotte, le quali fa vedere per huomini idonei, e matrone fidate,” &c.—PAULO JOVIO, *HISTORICO, DELLE COSE DELLA MOSCOVIA*.

“ Ce n'était point la noblesse d'origine, mais la beauté et la vertu qui guidaient les grands princes, ainsi que les sultans, dans le choix de leurs épouses.”—KARAMSIN, vol. vii. p. 274.

“ Le donne Moscovite si guastano con il belletto che usano in tanta quantita, che paiono infarinate.”—VIAGGI DI MOSCOVIA, 1688.

IN one of the new streets within the district of the Kitaigorod, at Moscow, was a building erected since the Tartar invasion of the preceding year. It was on a more extensive scale than common at that epoch, and was known as the house of Basmanoff. A lofty gate opened to a court-yard, and facing was a flight of steps

leading to a low entrance into the house. It was here that a horseman, whose apparel proclaimed him of rank, alighted without ceremony, and giving his steed in charge to a serving man in readiness in the court-yard, the son and heir of the house of Basmanoff entered the mansion.

He was a handsome youth, and his person was set off to advantage by the magnificent dress he wore. But there were evident signs of chagrin and disappointment in his features; and as he ascended to the *terem*, or apartments of the lady of the mansion, the waiting girls in the ante-room remarked that Theodore Alexeitch was the bearer of unwelcome tidings for their mistress, which augured not favourably for the humours they would have to endure.

The proud Boyarinia Gregoriovna Basmanoff was seated in state in her chamber of audience, receiving the contributions of her peasantry, and administering, through her steward, a little

wholesome correction to her rude and refractory vassals.

The Boyarina, wife of the noble Basmanoff, was superbly dressed. Her *feres*, or under garment, was of rich taffeta, ornamented and fastened in front by numerous small gold buttons. Over this, she wore the national *opachen*, the long sleeves of which, hanging *a la Hussar*, were never used. The dress was of cloth of gold. A high cap, which shone like a tiara, was studded with pearls, and her feet were cased in boots of red leather, curiously inlaid with pearls and precious stones.

“Indeed, this idleness incurs my displeasure,” said her ladyship. “The boor has been out three nights and not ensnared a single ice-duck: it is a favourite dish with me, and I am sorely disappointed. Methinks a little correction would marvellously sharpen the slave’s skill. Pray you administer, Mr. Steward, the *battaogs*.”

The boor summoned to receive the flogging was of gigantic figure, and might easily have crushed both steward and mistress, had he wished to make the attempt. But corporal castigation was not then viewed in any degrading light; it formed a bond of society. It seemed to connect every grade, from the Czar downwards, and flogging (*par excellence*) was a sure indication of an interest taken in the punished inferior, which reconciled him to the smart, more especially as none but the very dregs of the community had it not in their power to retaliate.

The slave consequently obeyed almost with alacrity the command, and stripping his sheepskin, spread it on the floor, and then lay upon it, taking his allotted quantity as comfortably as circumstances would allow, exposing his shoulders to the mercy of the Boyarina and the steward.

The rods of the battaogs whistled in their

descent, and a right lusty roar responded ; not that the boor's suffering warranted any such noisy display of feeling, but in the same ratio that the flogging was administered, from the affection of a good mistress, so did gratitude require a corresponding acknowledgment.

The lady, meanwhile, was busied enumerating the contributions of her vassals, and without interrupting her calculations, gave the word when she considered the boor's hunting capabilities had been sufficiently roused ; and certain it is, that on that same night an ice-duck was daintily served up for the Boyarina's supper.

Ere the Boyarina, however, had dismissed the steward, after the remaining boors had been salutarily admonished, she entered with him into a discussion of the interests of her estate, which proved that in no way did she belie the opinion her husband had entertained of her capabilities of managing it.

“ And as for the girls of the estate, I would have thee bring me report of the marriageable ones. How many suppose ye there may be?”

“ Twenty, or more,” replied the steward.

“ Select the prettiest of them for my inspection, that they may be disposed of to more advantage in the city. And, harkye, Youry,” said the Boyarina, addressing a man-servant in waiting, who, at the words, bent his forehead to the ground, “ thou hast no wife, yet art thou of an age to seek one, though thy sleek chin belies thy manhood; yet can I not afford to entertain idlers. Thou must to the estate, and pay the wenches some attention. Dost thou understand? The stock is somewhat barren, and we would have it multiply.”

Whether the proposition met with the approbation of Youry we are at a loss to say, for the orders of the Boyarina rarely offered a chance of evasion, and the serving-man again resumed his station at the entrance of the apartment.

“ And, mark you, forbid the clowns to cut their hair,” continued the mistress now to her steward: “ I have a market for it. A Jew from Novogorod will offer a price for all that measures an archine in length. By-the-bye, when they deserve a little castigation, thou mayest remit it in our merciful consideration; but shave off one side of the heads in lieu thereof, the remainder will grow on account for the next settlement.”

The steward bowed in submission, full of admiration at the “ political economy,” as he styled it, of the Boyarinia.

“ And thou mayest crop the married women. What do the hussies want with hair; do we not let them live?”

“ Thou art too indulgent, most merciful mistress,” said the steward, as he bowed.

“ Now do I bethink me, the Dutch physician to his majesty has besought me to procure for him some front teeth, at any cost, so they be white and sound. Now, pray thee, make choice

of some dozen. Tell them 'tis for their mistress, and they will not object to their extraction. I will positively ensure to them the possession of the double ones; surely they have not work for more."

What further instructions she might have had for the steward we cannot say, for at that moment the young Boyar, Theodore Basmanoff, entered the apartment, and he was dismissed.

"What thinkest, mother," said the dashing officer of the Opritchnina, "the Czar has appointed a new hetman to our legion."

"Ah! who may that be?"

"Nay, were you to guess till doomsday you would not name him, for he is an unknown vagrant, a vagabond cut-purse! By St. Serge! this insult is too much to bear."

"Calm thyself, my son. These are not times to resent the vagaries of the prince. But if thou wouldst adopt my policy, the enemy thou canst not struggle with thou mayst baffle. More fortresses are won by cunning device than taken by

assault. But what may be his name—his appearance?”

“Maluta Skuratoff, and a very giant is he in person and in strength. Even now the animal has cast his skin, and bears himself as high as any of us. But, by my ancestors! he shall not take precedence of the Basmanoffs.”

“Well! so thou proceedest with prudence. What news from the palace?”

“Little. The Englishman had audience. By-the-bye, Feodoroff is not of the living.”

“Sayest true?”

“The Czar himself dispatched him in open court.”

“Nay! Theodore, but reflect how ungrateful art thou to Providence. Here, in a breath, thou namest with indignation a new favourite, who, ten chances to one, will burn himself in his own light; and our fell enemy, Feodoroff, the stumbling-block in thy path, who now is removed for ever, hardly deserves thy noticing. Tut, tut, man! didst know thy advantages, thou

wouldst have more confidence. Art thou not young, and brave, and handsome withal? I fear the best of me thou hast not inherited—my judgment and prudence, or I should live to see thee Czar,” added, in a low voice, the Boyarinia.

The young Boyar started.

“There are events more impossible,” continued she, apparently communing with herself, as her eyes were directed, through the casement, to the distant towers of the Kremlin.

“’Tis a crazy platform for a throne so weighty,” continued the dame, “cemented with human blood; more blood must keep it from tottering, and the first hand that dares to strike will shake the fabric to its base.”

At this juncture the door of the apartment was again opened, and the elder Basmanoff entered.

“News, news! good wife!”

“ And say thy news is good—’twill please me more !”

“ Mayhap thou’lt think it so. The Czar marries !”

“ ’Tis no news, husband !”

“ How so, wife ? hadst thou heard it ?”

“ Some ha’f-dozen times have I, methinks,” replied the Boyarinia.

“ But I say truly ! he marries again, and for the seventh time.”

“ The old story, I imagine. His present wife will be sent to a convent for life. But who is the fortunate successor ?” inquired the Boyarinia.

“ After the old Muscovite fashion this time. Couriers are dispatched to all the provinces for a levy en masse. All ranks will be collected, so they have beauty.”

“ Now, this is brave news, indeed,” interrupted the lady.

“ In what doth it concern us? Do you suppose my sister would be a successful candidate?” inquired Theodore.

“ Suppose! She shall! I fear no rival of our beautiful Katinka. Propitious day!” exclaimed the lady, as she now hurriedly paced the room. “ I see the fortune of our house, and all my dreams of greatness realised at last. I fear no rival; but if one should be, I will frustrate her chance. No! no! the tide of fortune I have ever taken at the flood, and shall I fail, now that it generously overflows? Dost not know that the confiscated wealth of all who perish on the scaffold, is, by Russia’s law, the portion of the parents of the Czarina? and when was ever such a golden harvest of the booty of executions as in the reign of Ivan Vassilivitch?”

“ Thou art a miracle amongst women,” exclaimed the devoted husband, whose estimate of her judgment was in the inverse ratio of the Boyarinia’s respect for his own.

“ Now let us break the glorious news to Katinka, and if she have but a fraction of her mother’s tact, the issue cannot be doubted,” said the Boyarinia, as the young lady, who was the subject of their conversation, made her appearance.

She was young, and gorgeously apparelled. The sleeves of her dress, according to Muscovite rule, were twelve yards long, but gathered up from the shoulder to the wrist, and appeared as if her arms were buried in muffs. Her small feet were cased in yellow boots, the heels whereof elevated her five inches from the ground.

As for the beauty of her complexion, it was, as usual, to be taken wholly on trust, for she was so flowered over and rouged, according to custom, that nature had nothing to do with it.

Tricked out after this established fashion, it would be difficult to arrive, with any thing like a certainty, at an estimate of the young lady’s charms. But through the artificial, Nature

peeped out triumphant, in the jet brilliancy of her eye, the glossy braid of her hair, and in the graceful contour of her maiden form, leaving it matter of strong conjecture, that if she had had entirely her own way, the damsel would not have been one iota less attractive.

How many other recommendations she possessed for marital speculators remained for her future benedict to unravel; but of one there was evidence, in her blind submission to authority, as with alacrity she entered into the views of her parents, to undergo all operations of cosmetics and drilling in that absorbing study of her sex, the art of pleasing, and with the inviting perspective of the crown of a Czarina as the glorious prize for her exertions.

CHAPTER V.

“C’est par des actions utiles que nous prouvons notre dévouement au tzar, et non pas comme toi, par les dissolutions de Sodome.”—KARAMSIN, vol. x. p. 22.

“Convient il à un monarque de faire l’histriion? Quant à moi, boyard et membre du conseil, je rougirais d’agir comme un insensé!”—IDEM.

IT was Easter Eve. The interior of the Kremlin was comparatively silent and deserted, for the Czar was gone to the palace of the slobode Alexandroffsky. But in the immediate vicinity of the venerable pile of Spas-na-Boru, there was an appearance of bustle and activity. The pious Muscovites were repairing, at that late hour, from all quarters of the city, to anticipate, with prayer, the commemoration of the resurrection. In the niches outside the buildings were to be seen, by the light which streamed

from the windows of the cathedral, the professed devotees and anchorites, objects loathsome and repulsive to sight ; fanatics, whose denuded and macerated bodies were exposed, in proof of abstinence and self-denial. The matted tresses of one hung like the untwisted ends of a rope. The skin of another seemed to have acquired from filth the texture of the hide of a rhinoceros. The nails of the toes and fingers of a third, suffered to grow in uninterrupted deformity, were of the colour and hardness of the talons of a bird of prey. But from such revolting objects of mistaken piety, let us turn to the unostentatious worshippers who were pouring fast into the cathedral. The church was well lighted ; the images were placed advantageously, and the mummies of saints, brought forth from the recesses of the vaults, were there to attest the importance of the coming anniversary of glory to Christendom. The high-priests were in humble prostration and prayer ; and the multi-

tudes, reverential and silent, offered the imposing sight of the sincere devotion of so large an assembly.

Lowly and meek, from the palace of the Czar, the father of the church would trace his steps at eventide to a humbler world, and learn the lesson of his country's need amidst the scenes of depravity and wretchedness in the purlieus of a metropolis; but when the cup of life was embittered by the revolting spectacle of crime and licentiousness, the priest, untiring in the benevolent pursuit, would turn to some retreat, where an exception would court him back to the love of his fellow-creatures, and for the sake of the few, the metropolitan would toil again for the regeneration of the many.

The venerable Philip, the beloved, the adored, of his flock, was there. He, who had reluctantly left the solitude of Solovsky, to wear the white mitre of metropolitan forced upon him, had disappointed the views of the Czar.

Terrestrial glory could not dazzle the holy man : he had appealed to the tyrant, and, for a while, the abominations had ceased. Ivan dreaded the power of Philip, who reigned in the hearts of his people.

There were a few who stood forth from the ignorance and superstition of the day, and, endowed with master powers, shed a halo around them, towards whom envy of superior merit was disarmed, and to whom superstition awarded the reputation of sage and prophet. Of this number was Philip. His influence had crept into the hearts of his fellow-creatures ; he had won their veneration by his example and precepts. His austere life, whilst it commanded all the implicit veneration then bestowed upon the noble anchorite, was linked with a mental refinement, which gained him the court of the great, and the love of the good. It belonged to a mind of no ordinary mould to gain in those days an ascendancy, by wisdom,

purity, and virtue. Amidst the darkness and vulgar prejudices of the age, he was the herald of better yet unborn generations.

But the massacres had recommenced. The streets, the market-places, were filled with the bodies of citizens butchered by the Opritchnina, and the days of the virtuous prelate were now devoted to console the afflicted. They clung to him as their last hope; they pointed out to him the streets stained with blood, and the old man wept with them and prayed.

Accessible to lord and serf, his ready ear was open to the voice of the poor; and the feeble tones which now reached him from a suppliant sank into his heart.

At first, so faint and soft was the voice, he thought a woman spoke, but, turning, beheld one dressed in mean but male attire.

“Father! in the hour of trial thou wast ever my solace; in this of despair, even thy consolations must fail.”

“ Son!” said the holy man, with severity, “ on the believer alone do I bestow my counsel.”

“ Alas! hear me. I am doomed to guilt. My earthly master commands me to wickedness. Hear me: I am not what I seem. I am but a weak woman.”

The prelate suffered the penitent to proceed. The agonized tone of the speaker rivetted his attention.

“ I am a mother, and my child knows me not. I was poor, but she made me wealthy, for I have all a mother’s love. In evil hour I was tempted at her birth, for lucre, to nurse the daughter of a lady of rank. Hideous disease discovered itself, and disfigured the Boyarina’s child. She disowned it, and swore to mine, and left me motherless. Soon after the fatal bereavement, I assumed this disguise and entered the Boyarina’s service. I have lived with

my child to this hour. I have been her slave, untiring, fond, devoted; and she has loved me as a menial may be loved. Yet I was happy. To-day my mistress, my child's false mother, prompted by odious cupidity, bids me leave to dwell on the estate, and intermarry. This breaks through the disguise I had so carefully preserved for many years, and parts me from my child. Tell me, father, how shall I escape this doom."

"Who may thy mistress be?" inquired the prelate.

"The Boyarinia Basmanoff."

"Ha! I could have wished thee in better hands. Thy own name?"

"They call me Youry."

The prelate seemed to muse. "After the festival of to-morrow, seek me here. I will bethink me of thy stress, for now my duty calls"——

“ Thy blessing, holy father.”

The old man fervently bestowed his benediction, and now ascended before the Ikonostas.

Midnight struck. At once the ten thousand bells of the churches of Moscow, with their iron tongues, proclaimed with stunning clamour the arrival of the anniversary of the day which once dawned for the salvation of a world.

At a distance of three leagues from Moscow, on the border of a deep forest, rose the dark towers of the fastness of the palace of the slobode Alexandroffsky. In this frowning and castellated abode, surrounded by dense woods, the Czar devoted himself to prayer and revelry. That night he had returned to his den, and installed in his office the new favourite butcher, Maluta Skuratoff. More than ordinary ferocity was now settled on the features of the Czar. The audience of the Englishman had stung him to the quick. The tyrant had been made to feel that there were nations who mocked his

despotism and power, who lived and were free.

Some hundred guests had been summoned to the banquet of the night, and when the Czar appeared, his eye ranged along the glittering crowd that lined the brilliant saloon.

But some there were, some few remaining Princes and Boyars, who, forced to join the revel, stood aloof from the disgraceful excesses at the orgies of the palace of the slobode. The suspicious eye of the Czar was upon them; for they stood betwixt him and his conscience. With stern countenances such noble guests looked with a freezing glance upon the abominations and fooleries around them, and rejected with scorn the cups of the reveller.

“Mark ye not!” observed the promising heir of Basmanoff, “the Prince Dmitri Oblensky Ovtshinin: he spurns thy favours, and wears upon his countenance discontent; now would I wager he is a disaffected subject.”

The eye of Ovtshinin was then upon the Czar and his minion, and his attentive ear caught up the words.

“Vile tool! Base flatterer! By honourable deeds do we prove our devotion to the Czar, and not, like thee, by filthy abominations.”

“By all the saints, proud Boyar, we will put thy boasted loyalty to the test,” exclaimed the autocrat. “Bring hither the spiced hydromel;” and a huge goblet of fiery liquid was handed to the Czar.

“Off with it to our health; and if thou leavest but one drop, thy life shall answer for the treason.”

The prince, with a firm hand, seized the cup, but the first draft of the drugged and burning libation, like molten lead, fired his throat; the cup dropped from his hand—but that of the Czar grasped a poniard, which was instantly buried to the hilt in the heart of Ovtshinin.

Like an interlude in the drunken and tumultuous scene, in a few moments the memory of his victim had passed away.

The vast halls of the slobode palace now resounded with boisterous revelry. The night was calm and beautiful; and on its stillness broke the din and clamour of riotous debauch. The orgies of the night had commenced at an early hour. The halls were thronged with revellers; but there were many there by command, whose minds condemned, and whose hearts abhorred the pageantry around. Like lambs to the slaughter, many a noble dame was led to the banquet, and forced to smile on the unbridled licentiousness of the throng. The Czar was drunk, and his wanton lusts broke down every barrier of decorum. Passive were the fathers and the husbands of the youthful beauties of the feast, to the coarse and indecent attacks on feminine delicacy by their monarch. There were those, too, who that very day had witnessed the slaugh-

ter of relations and friends, and yet were bound to appear there with a smile, to confirm the justice of the sovereign-executioner—to quaff the cup, pressed by the lips of the butcher-legion, and to drink “long life” to the Parent of Holy Russia.

Reeling from the banquet, the monarch led the way to the sumptuous hall where the histrions awaited to enact their parts, and anon, to the sound of numerous instruments, the dance began. Successive groups appeared, disguised in strange and grotesque costumes.

Drunk with wine, frenzied with excitement, the monarch snatched a mask, and, clad in the garb of a mountebank, joined in the capers of the intoxicated revellers.

The princely Boyar Repnin looked sadly on the bacchanalian crew. Honest shame for his country’s sovereign suffused his face with tears.

“Now, by Saint Nicholas!” vociferated Ivan,

as he caught a glance of the reproachful countenance of the nobleman; “now, by Saint Nicholas! we’ll make a clown of thee. A mask for the mighty dignitary, Boyar Repnin.

Maluta Skuratoff held out the object of his demand.

The Czar affixed it himself on the burning cheeks of his silent reprovcr. “Now will we see thee dance: make way for the light-footed counsellor.”

With proud indignation, the noble-minded Boyar tore the mask from his face, and trampled it beneath his feet.

“Doth it become the sovereign prince of Russia to play the harlequin? As counsellor and Boyar of thy realm, I scorn to personate the madman.”

“Away with him!” exclaimed Ivan, suffocated with rage. The Boyar disappeared; and to the circumstance of his masquerading disguise, may be attributed his escape on that night.

Ivan moved on with something terrible in his glance. Laying his hand upon the shoulder of the Czarevitch John, and supported by his iron staff, he progressed slowly through the crowded halls.

Arrived at the door of his private apartments, and bidding Maluta Skuratoff await him on the threshold, and not to suffer intrusion, the monarch entered, attended only by his beloved son.

CHAPTER VI.

“A monkey famous amongst the Muscovites to this day.”
 —COLLINS'S PRESENT STATE OF RUSSIA, chap. vi. p. 29.
 LONDON, 1671.

“His limbes in lesser space than man's are knit,
 Beneath his eyes his nose more flat doth sit,
 And like the face which crabbed age doth spill,
 Deep wrinkles, frowne-like, his front did fill.
 There to his apish limbs are ebery where
 Thick obergrowne with sallow-coloured haire.”

THE BEGGER'S APE.

ON the evening of the day when Sir Thomas Randolph had made his entry into Moscow, in a house newly erected, and adjoining the hotel appointed for the British ambassador, a young girl was seated near the window of the apart-

ment, engaged in embroidery. Though her figure was in height a woman's, yet its slender proportions gave evidence that she was but young.

She was not dressed after the fashion of the country. A black velvet bodice traced a shape of exquisite symmetry; the skirt of her dress was of scarlet taffeta, and her tiny feet were cased in high-heeled shoes. Her hair was parted, but not confined; and it lay in glossy ringlets on her shoulders, where, from her transparent complexion, they seemed to repose as on a mirror. Her countenance, which now wore some shade of anxiety, was of that radiant and expressive cast that holds communion with every passing thought, and seems to reveal it to the beholder; for its innocence and purity needed nor mask nor blush. She looked her thoughts, and her thoughts met the world face to face. All frankness, all confidence, her full and beaming eyes assuredly rivetted those of

the beholder, whilst the depth of their expression ever seemed unfathomed; so much of soul was there. A smile played round the unopened yet speaking lips, for there was language in their silence.

She had turned wistfully towards the door of the apartment, as if the sound of welcome footsteps met her ear, when it opened, and a stranger appeared before her.

The visitor instantly conceived that some other presence would have been more welcome; then respectfully naming the purport of his visit, he inquired for Dr. Wilmington.

It was matter of delightful surprise to Grace Wilmington to be accosted in English, and, recovering herself, complacently replied,—

“ Pray you be seated, sir, my father will not tarry ?”

“ And are you Grace ?” exclaimed the stranger; “ my esteemed and worthy friend Wilmington’s daughter? Your hand, sweet

girl," said he, with a winning voice, the music and honesty of which charmed the physician's daughter as she gave it him.

" 'Tis now some years since he left us," added the stranger, " and you were then but a child. I shall have joy to meet him in this foreign land."

" I ween you are of the embassy that arrived to-day in Moscow," rejoined Grace, who felt at home again. " Pray you, inform me how fares it with the gallant Sir Thomas Randolph, of whom my father speaks with high consideration."

" Right well, I do assure you, sweet lady; and I am here on his behalf, to learn some tidings of his friend."

" Gentle sir! I trust anon he will answer for himself," said Grace, who could have wished Sir Thomas had been his own herald; but she quickly conjectured that the exalted station of

an envoy would not permit the condescension. She resumed:—

“ My father, sir, hath somewhat altered of late. Indeed, his duties are too great a task; and 'tis verily his determination to urge our ambassador to obtain from the Czar permission to return to his country.”

The stranger did not immediately reply, for sudden thought appeared to cloud his countenance, which Grace thought of the handsomest. Then she remarked his costume, which was novel to her eye, yet pleased it her; and on his breast there shone a star, set with much art, and rivalling the light of day. The pommel of his sword, too, was enriched with jewels, and in his belt a dagger was seen, ornamented in like fashion. In his gloved hand he held his beaver, wherein, with an aigrette of gold, was fixed a goodly plume. And he bore himself with so much grace and ease, that the maiden

did opine *he* should have been the representative of England's queen.

"Now, here my father comes," said Grace, as she sprung forward to meet him, for it was he who opened the door.

Pale and sad, the physician seemed himself in need of the skill of his profession. So much of care and depression was in his honest face, that the visitor seemed to have caught its sympathy, for he made no advance towards him.

But suddenly the countenance of the doctor was illumined with pleasurable expression.

"Sir Thomas!" exclaimed he, as he sprang towards his visitor: "can I believe my eyes? This honour"——

"Say this pleasure, my true friend," interrupted the ambassador. "Ods life, friend Walter, thou art no barbarian Czar, that I should stand on etiquette with thee," he added, lustily shaking him by the hand: "I would not

have lost the pleasure of this surprise for my knighthood. But," he continued, "thou hast had a representative in thy absence, which well nigh, with all my boasting of true friendship, made me forget wherefore I came."

"At least your credentials, sir ambassador, for you left me to conjecture 'twas your inferior I addressed," observed, somewhat tartly, Grace Wilmington, who had enough of her sex's disposition to dislike a mystery she had not herself unravelled; yet, by some strange contradiction, was pleased withal that she had been mistaken in her guest.

"I beseech you, Sir Thomas, heed not the pertness of my poor girl; she hath not been taught the fashions of society, and 'tis the sorrow of my exile that we are debarred therefrom."

"Call not that pertness which hath such becoming grace, my friend. 'Tis I that am in

fault, and pray thee intercede with me for having trespassed unannounced into the presence of thy sweet daughter."

"Ever the courtier, Sir Thomas," smiled the doctor.

"There I needs must be thy reprover, Walter. What! shall my oldest friend din mine ears with this knighthood, as if he had been nurtured in the school of etiquette at Hampton Court? Drop me, I do entreat, this *Sir*, and call me plainly, as of yore, Tom Randolph."

"It comes to me more naturally, I do confess."

"Then sup with me, friend Walter: amongst us thou'lt meet no myrmidons of Russia's court, no restraint upon our thoughts, no tie upon our tongues. By virtue of mine office is my mansion sacred from intrusion, nor dares the foot of licentiousness, or pride, pass unbidden its threshold. George Tuberville, my secretary, will be one of us."

“Thou must excuse it,” answered Wilmington, as he looked round for Grace. But she had quitted the apartment, and seizing the moment of her absence, he acquainted Sir Thomas, that, owing to the turbulent excesses of the court, property and person were insecure, that he had not contemplated his lengthened stay at Moscow, for the Czar was ever objecting to his departure ; and his child having now come to an attractive age, the unbridled licentiousness of the monarch and his court, had created in him much alarm for her safety.

“I leave not my house after night-fall, save at the express command of the Czar, and secret misgivings warn me to effect my departure for England. In behalf of which needful resolution, I now entreat thee, as my old friend, and my country’s ambassador, to obtain from his majesty, permission to resign the office of physician to his person.”

“That will I cheerfully undertake, nay, insist

upon, if need be," warmly rejoined the ambassador.

"Thou hast yet to learn the despot knows no law," continued his friend.

"Some stratagem must be resorted to. In my profession do I stand in high favour with his majesty. Fain would I see his preference given to the Dutch physician, Bomelius, whom he affects for guilty purposes. But it hath been my fate to treat his ailments with some success. Nor physic will he take, but such as I prepare. He likes me not, but trusts me."

"I will not disguise to thee, that a crisis is at hand," observed Sir Thomas, "the which hath circumvented me with great difficulties in this mission. Yet is my path straightforward, and at all hazard I will see the rights and chartered privileges of my countrymen respected. With them I stand or fall. But be not faint of heart, my worthy friend. There is something in the name of Englishmen. We'll stick to it;

and the Czar knows well that England's anger were but a sorry acquisition for Muscovy. But we must have more converse on this matter; and since thou canst not be guest of mine, let ancient friendship resume its unceremonious sway, and I will avail myself of such hours of thy companionship here, as thou mayest feel disposed to welcome me unto."

"Then begin this night," said the doctor, with warmth, "and bring with thee young Master Tuberville. Exile begets a brotherly feeling amongst fellow-countrymen, and I will give him English welcome."

At a late hour, the invited guests entered the dwelling of the doctor, and Master Tuberville was warmly greeted by the host.

They had not been long seated when an inner door of the apartment opened, and Grace came forward.

There was a slight change in her apparel, if not in her appearance. She wore the same

black velvet bodice, but the frill was of more open work, and her neck was less concealed. A Venetian chain of gold was 'passed around it, and her kirtle, which was now of gold cloth, was trimmed with a deep border of black wolf skin, which, falling round her person, developed her shape. Her hair, as before, was left unadorned, and as she approached, Master Tuberville did adjudge her as fair a maid as an honest man might wish to look upon.

Right English was the meeting of all parties, whilst a brotherly feeling of exile did away with all formal restraint, Sir Thomas himself setting the example. Swift flew the time at the hospitable board of Wilmington, nor was such fare wanting as might tempt an English palate.

Sterlet and wild fowl, with a plentiful supply of Malvagia and Medonia, offered a cheer that gave a zest to the conversation, and they soon forgot, in their recurrence to bygone days, that

the sea divided them from their loved land of liberty.

It was a new position for Grace, that of hostess; nor did she perform it less effectively that she had her father's most valued friend for her guest.

Master George Tuberville did in a degree disconcert the untutored maiden, as he somewhat too frequently fixed his admiring gaze upon her; nor less fascinated were the regards of Sir Thomas, though less embarrassing, as, from constant converse with her father on English friends and English scenes, he had played a part so prominent in them, as almost to appear an old acquaintance.

“Methinks it were a matter of moral impossibility,” observed Master George Tuberville, who affected the enunciation of dandies of the Elizabethan days, “that civilisation could exist in this region. Even in the dog-days, a north-

easter would starve a man himself, and much more his manners, ‘positivement,’” interlarded the courtier of Hampton Palace, with the smattering of French then in vogue; “there is no polishing in this hemisphere, unless a Christian have a hide like a rhinoceros, for he must feel himself, before he can feel for others.”

The doctor smiled; and the countenance of Grace assumed a look of some surprise, as to how the rigours of any climate could reach such a creature so becloaked and befurred.

The said George Tuberville, secretary to Sir Thomas, had accompanied the knight from that impulse to travel, so prevalent and fashionable, from the recent exploits of Sir Walter Raleigh; and had thus permitted the transport of his elegant and exquisite person from that centre of etiquette and politeness, the court of Elizabeth, to the icebergs and barbarisms of Moscow and the Kremlin.

The ambassador had been entertained through-

out the journey with his lamentations and regrets for the temerity and folly of his enterprise. But the secretary consoled himself by venting his complaints in poetical effusions to his friends, and by a resolute vow, that if ever he regained his native shore in a whole skin, not the mines of El Dorado would tempt him again to emulate the adventures of the day.

We must leave, for a moment, the convivial party, more effectually to introduce an unexpected guest, about to make his appearance under the roof of the doctor, and lead the reader to an apartment of the ambassador's hotel, where some of his household had been freely regaling themselves with the sumptuous allowance of aqua-vita, granted for the entertainment of the embassy. And we would infer from the appearance of those who had partaken of it, that it was of rare and potent quality, as they lay in lethargic drowsiness, some on benches, others, more at ease, on the floor. But one of the party

seemed to have acquired more than usual alacrity, from the share he had taken in the potations, and very calmly and leisurely proceeded to disencumber one of his hat, another of his cloak, a third of his rapier, and, contrary to all Christian rule, forthwith made his exit by the casement instead of the door.

We shall not attempt to follow the nimble personage who rapidly and wonderfully scaled the walls of the mansion, gained the roof of the hotel, and effected a landing upon that of the adjoining house, which was the abode of Dr. Wilmington.

The joke and repartee now enlivened the social board of the physician. The presence of Grace gave additional point and gallantry to the conversational powers of the courtly representative of Elizabeth.

And much esteemed as were the talents of his countrywomen, in that bright age of Great Britain, in none of them had he met with a

rarer combination of good, and elegant qualities, than in the fair and unassuming daughter of his friend.

But whilst forming his silent estimate of her endowments, his enraptured eyes fixed upon the placid features of the lovely girl, she uttered a shriek of sudden alarm as she sprang towards her father, and called his attention to the appearance of a face that had most audaciously pushed open the casement of the window, and was peering from beneath the brim of a huge beaver upon the company within.

“Audacious monkey !” exclaimed Sir Randolph, as he espied the intruder, who had followed up his advantage by springing into the chamber, and now led the ambassador a dance, to the amusement of the household of the worthy physician.

Now, whatever Sir Thomas might have implied by the epithet he so unceremoniously bestowed upon the intruder, certain it is, that it

in no way enlightened Grace upon the character of the new visitor.

But we hasten to satisfy the curiosity of our readers, and, in the veracious task before us, to acquaint him, lest we should be supposed to compromise, in their estimation, the dignity of man—that the visitor was indeed a *monkey*.

Albeit, the character of this intruder might well be questioned by the curious. After the profound search we have made into the matter, we are disposed to say with a learned writer on the subject,—

“Who can venture to pronounce that this beast was not a responsible agent?”

Has not the learned compiler of the *Memoirs of Monkeys*, classed them in scientific order, as M.D.’s politicians, acoustical, accomplished, professional, and nautical? And has not a biographer of no mean pretensions, declared them to be skilled in architecture, and advanced

proof of their cultivating the useful as well as the ornamental arts.

Since Locke has said that “thought, reason, and volition, may have been given to matter,” they must have existed separate from that to which it was given; and it follows, therefore, that all teachable creatures may have, according to some philosophers, an immortal principle.

But we digress, the more reprehensibly, as we left the fair daughter of the physician in some state of apprehension of the dubious personage described, especially as she suddenly felt her feet and skirt encircled by the arms of the intruder, who, with great penetration, considered himself more protected there, from the wrath of Sir Thomas, than in any retreat which the apartment seemed to offer.

At length order was restored—Grace effectually interceded for the offender, and the ambassador formally introduced this personage

under the name of Jocko, the traveller, whose rare parts and facetious manner had won the favour of the whole embassy, and had created, at their entrance into the city of the Czar, more sensation than all the rest of the pageant; a rumour having spread over Moscow, that the devil was in the pay of the British ambassador.

At a late hour the happy party separated, promising each other a speedy meeting; and master Jocko officered the ambassador and his secretary to the hotel with a link, when the sentinels, at his appearance, made a larger and more deferential circuit than usual to admit the party; the monkey, in this instance, impressing them with more deference than the representative of the English Crown did himself.

Master George Tuberville, after debating at some length upon the sweet perfections of the physician's daughter, made his obeisance, and retired to his apartment, where, with truly politic diligence, he did indite a letter, which we copy

verbatim, as it is handed down to us in the compilations of that eventful epoch.

Certain Letter in verse, written by Master George Tuberville, out of Muscovia, which went a secretary thither with Master Thomas Randolph, her Majestie's Ambassadour to the Emperour, to certain friends of his in London, describing the manners of the country and people.

To his especial friend, **M**aster **D**ancie,

“ My Dancy deare, when I recount within my brest,
 My London friends, and wonted mates, and thee above the rest.
 I feele a thousand fits of deepe and deadly woe,
 To think that I from land to sea, from blisse to bale did go.
 I left my native soile, full like a retchlesse man,
 And unacquainted of the coast, among the Russes ran :
 A people passing rude, to vices vile inclinde,
 Folke fit to be of Bacchus traine, so quaffing is their kinde.
 Drinke is their whole desire, the pot is all their pride,
 The sobrest head doth once a day stand needfull of a guide.
 If he to banquet bid his friends, he will not shrinke
 On them at dinner to bestow a dozen kindes of drinke :
 Such lecour as they have, and as the countrey gives,
 But chiefly two, one called Kuas, whereby the Mousiki lives.
 Small ware and water like, but somewhat tart in taste,
 The rest is mead of honie made wherewith their lips they
 baste.

And if he goe unto his neighbour as a guest,
 He cares for little meat, if so his drinke be of the best.
 No wonder though they use such vile and beastly trade,
 Sith with the hatchet and the hand, their chiefest goods be
 made.

Their Idoles have their hearts, on God they never call,
 Unless it be (Nichola Bough) that hangs against the wall.
 The house that hath no God, or painted Saint within,
 Is not to be resorted to, that roofe is full of sinne,
 Besides their private Gods in open places stand
 Their crosses unto which they crooeche, and bless themselves
 with hand.

Devoutly downe they ducke, with forehead to the ground
 Was never more deceit in ragges, and greasie garments found.
 Almost the meanest man in all the countrey rides,
 The woman eke, against our use, her trotting horse bestrides.
 In sundry colours they both men and women goe,
 In buskins all, that money have on buskins to bestoe
 Ech woman hanging hath a ring within her eare,
 Which all of ancient use, and some of very pride doe weare..
 Their gate is very brave, their countenance wise and sadde,
 And yet they follow fleshy lustes, their trade of living badde
 It is no shame at all accompted to defile
 Another's bedde, they make no care their follies to concile,
 Is not the meanest man, in all the land but hee,
 To buy her painted colours doeth allow his wife a fee,
 Wherewith she deckes herselfe, and dies her tawnie skinne,
 She pranks and paints her smoakie face, both brow, lip, cheek
 and chinne
 Yea those that honest are if any such they bee
 Within the land, doe use the like ; a man may plainly see.

Upon some women's cheekes the painting how it lies,
In plaister sort, for that too thicke her face the harlot dies.
But such as skilfull are, and cunning Dames indeede,
By dayly practice doe it well, yea sure they doe excede.
They lay their colours so, as he that is full wise,
May easily be deceived therein, if he doe trust his eyes.
I not a little muse, what madnesse makes them paint
Their faces, waying how they keep the stoove by meere constraint.

For seldom when, unlesse on church or marriage day
A man shall see the dames abroad, that are of best array,
The Russie means to reap the profit of her pride,
And so he mewes her to be sure, she lye by no man's side.
Thus much, friend Dancie, I did wean to write to thee
To let thee weete in Russia land, what men and women bee.
Hereafter I perhaps of other things will write
To thee and other of my friends, which I shall see with sight;
And other stuffe besides which true report shall tell
Meanwhile I end my loving lines, and bid thee now farewell."

CHAPTER VII.

“ Dans les rues, sur les places, on voyait partout des cadavres auxquels personne n’osait donner la sepulture. les gens de bien venaient trouver Philippe; ils lui montraient en gémissant les rues teintes de sang”. KARAMSIN, vol. ix. p. 125.

“ Le sang de cet homme vertueux (Prince Repnin) poignardé pendant qu’il priait le seigneur, arrosa le parvis de l’église.”—IDEM.

THE apartment to which the Czar had retired was dimly lighted. The glare of lamps in the adjacent halls left this comparatively in the shade; and the darkness seemed welcome to the monarch, as he stretched himself upon the couch, and for some moments appeared lost in inward communing.

Ivan now appeared to dose away the fumes of the libations in which he had recently indulged. Flushed was his face, long bloated by excesses. Repeatedly starting, and again recomposing himself to sleep, he seemed long to struggle for the boon, if boon it were, to judge from the contortions of his features, and the gurgling in his throat of inarticulate sounds, the evidence of contending passions and undying remorse.

At length he became more calm in appearance; more distinct were the words which, at first incoherently muttered, began to form themselves into somewhat of meaning.

“ I say ’twas poison did it. No? Turn not away Nastasia, wife—my only wife—for what are they who share my couch? I loathe them, each, and all. Oh, thou wast pure and beautiful! Life was a Heaven with thee—without thee, Hell! and its creatures fiends. I have warred with them—butchered them. Heaven

made this earth a wilderness when it snatched thee away. And shall my slaves be more favoured than their Czar?

“Avaunt! ye ghastly shapes! Not yet at rest? Shall I to the work again? Down! down!” and the Czar shook violently.

“Thou wast a traitor, Feodoroff. No? I say thou wast! Death was but slight amends.

“Ovtschinin? Shake not thy gory beard at me. Come in thy flesh and blood, that I may tear thee. No! not wrong me. Thou wast happy, in thy young bride—Heaven in its cruelty denied me—tore from my arms. Shall the slave be more happy than—— Oh! go not, Nastasia! How beautiful in death. What then? Ah! deniest thou the hope?”

The monarch's hands were clasped, and stretched towards the vision of his dream, as the curtain was slightly pushed aside, and the Czarevitch bent over his couch.

The perspiration was on the monarch's

brow ; his heaving breast betrayed the struggle within. The Czarevitch patiently awaited the climax of his despair, which would arouse him from his sleep.

“ Nastasia, leave me not. Ha ! her features wane ! there, there.” The Czar sprung from the couch, as he wildly gazed around.

The Czarevitch stood uncovered beside the couch of his father, and silently waited to be addressed. But the stillness around was not for some time interrupted, except occasionally by the sounds of merriment in the adjoining halls, which, despite the massive masonry of the walls of the palace of the slobode, reached the ear.

So dim at first was the light of the apartment, that the Czarevitch, though his eyes were fixed upon the face of his father, was not at first conscious that the Czar's also steadfastly regarded him. Through the dim obscurity the gaze of the monarch gained upon him ; and as by de-

gress he beheld more distinctly the features of the despot, hideous and ghastly was the appearance they assumed. As if fascinated, the monarch's son felt unable to move, almost to breathe; and when at length Ivan, in a low and monotonous tone, broke the silence, each syllable came laden with awful import.

“ I loved her, cherished her. Heaven's curse was on me when she died. But no; 'twas poison did it—poison! Heaven gifted her with a power of discernment that discovered the deeds of the traitors around me. They feared her, and they murdered thy poor mother. I have waded through oceans of blood, shed to avenge her death. But more shall die for it! The traitors—hitherto I have been a match for them; an unforeseen power protects me from their machinations.

“ They poisoned thy mother. In doing so, they poisoned my heart, for it never knew another joy. Can other wives replace her?

Can all the beauty of Russia restore the love I bore my Nastasia? Vain the thought. I loved them not. Russia was beggared of loveliness when Nastasia died, and I was widowed for ever. I live only for revenge. I have sought to fill her place; wives have shared my bed; but the throne of the Czarina was like my heart, vacant still; I have wedded again and again, only to turn in disgust from my bride.”

The Czar had gradually raised the tones of his voice, and was now seated erect.

“ But I shall purge thine inheritance, my son;” and Ivan, grasping his iron staff, shook it with portentous meaning.

“ Treason is abroad, but it shall be crushed; the hydra-headed conspiracy shall meet its lawful doom. And thou, my son—my successor—thy mother’s semblance—inheritor of thy father’s power—thine heir-loom is not peace. The watchful eye of an inquisitor must guard thee. Wait not to contend with the enemy,

but destroy his power in the bud. The slaves that own my rule, the passive instruments of my will, if suffered to think, would let ambition creep into their minds, and grow, till they abjured their monarch's right; as if the empire was not made for Ivan, but Ivan for Muscovy. Short-sighted fools! I was a novice once; their murmurs alarmed me, and I sought to shelter myself in the dominions of Elizabeth of England. S'death! they humbled me to seek protection from a foreigner.

“I have,” continued Ivan, and his features assumed a fiendish expression; “I have a loathing hatred to that land, that sends its traffickers to vie like princes with Russia's Boyars. The traders come like potentates; and their ambassador like a scrivener, to square accounts 'twixt them and Muscovy's mighty Czar; and now, forsooth, arrives Sir Thomas Randolph, ambassador, fully empowered to treat of differences

between Russia's Czar and Elizabeth's beloved shopkeepers!

“It galls me that I have been cozened by this royal jade. My hand she did refuse; and when I sought even to honour as my bride, the Lady Mary Hastings, the baggage, the subject of the queen of a petty island, Russia never heard of till some twenty years ago, refused the hand of Ivan, Czar of Muscovy.

“Does not the blood mount to thy cheek, for this indignity? She said she was the queen of a free people, and could not compel her subject.”

“Free! What is that? There is no word for it in Holy Russia. Does Elizabeth imply her subjects are her masters? She their slave? Thanks to Saint Nicholas! we are not Czar of England.”

And Ivan was for some moments buried in thought.

The Czarevitch, who had listened attentively to the impassioned language of the despot, now interposed.

“Czar! Mighty! Omnipotent in Moscow! Shall it be said—shall it be boasted by an Englishman, that the desires of the sovereign of Muscovy were thwarted? Now do, I beseech you, tutor this envoy into deference for your state.”

At that moment the thundering peal of the bells of the distant city resounded through the halls of the palace of the slobode Alexandroffsky. The monarch sprung to his feet.

“Hark! to the proud prelate’s thunders! ’Tis time they should be silenced. The rebel monk conspires against us with the enemy, undermines the affections of the people, and tricks us of their love. Now, by the mitre! will we crush the ambitious priest. Ho! friends!” shouted the monarch, and striking with vehemence his iron staff upon the ground.

Maluta Skuratoff, the new favourite and the chief of the Opritchnina appeared.

“To horse! Hear ye not our honest Philip calls us to prayer! Off for Spas-na-Boru; and bring my hood and cassock. ’Tis fitting raiment for the occasion. Thou, Maluta, make we sacristan: and apparel thyself for the altar. Viezemosky, do thou likewise. We will teach this frocked traitor his breviary. And bear us company, my son, for thou shalt learn a lesson; this holy day shall make thee perfect in the school of sovereigns.”

Not the pomp of the Vatican ever equalled, on this auspicious day, the splendour of the metropolitan Greek church. The magnificent dresses, the patient work of a large community of nuns, glittering with silver, and gold, and precious stones, dazzled the eye. The long beards and flowing hair of the priests covered their breasts and shoulders. Their high caps sparkling with gems, and miniature paintings of

their saints set in rare jewels, produced a gorgeous pageant, such as no other church ever boasted.

It was at that solemn moment of the ceremony, when the patriarch, clad in a purple robe, advanced from the altar, and descending into the body of the church, concluded the whole ceremony by crawling round the marble pavement on his hands and knees, kissing the consecrated pictures, whether on the pillars, the walls, the altars, or the tombs, the priests and all the people following his example—when the sepulchres were opened, and the mummied, uncorrupted bodies of saints were exhibited,—that the fatal shout of the Opritchnina, “Hoida! hoida!” was heard, even as the metropolitan pronounced the exulting “Christ is risen.”

That dreaded shout rang through the vast edifice; it smote upon the ears of a multitude too dense to enter the church, and awaiting the benediction, like a summons to death, it trans-

fixed with terror the prostrate congregation. Some few had presence of mind to make their escape, but the mass of the people were motionless.

“ Hoida! hoida !” the Opritchnina come.

A body of three hundred horsemen were advancing, and but for their blood-cry, would not at first have been recognised. They wore high caps like the Greek clergy, and their long black cassocks appeared to complete their attire. As they approached, however, the accoutrements at their saddle-bows proclaimed their office—the dog’s-*head*, the silver broom,—the device of Ivan, to signify that they came to bite the enemies of the Czar, and to sweep Russia,—were there suspended, and proclaimed the legion of slaughterers.

The holy patriarch heard that shout at the moment he gave out the blessed word of salvation. The rising sun had sent forth its first glorious beam. It lay soft and bright on the

high and venerable forehead of the metropolitan, and in its own celestial radiance revealed a countenance which forcibly recalled to the mind of the beholder, that man was made after the image of his God. A hallowed serenity was there at that moment of Christian exultation. The silvery whiteness of his long beard and hair, and the pale but healthful cheek of virtuous old age, gave imposing effect to the absorbing theme of that sacred hour, and seemed to have exalted his soul to hold communion with his God.

But the destroyer was nigh, and he was recalled from his heavenly abstraction to shudder at the sight of the murderer.

The troop of mock priests alighted at the gates of the cathedral, and, in orderly procession, advanced towards the altar. The Czar led the way. At the foot of the incroast he bent his head, to receive the blessing of the father of the church.

The lips of the metropolitan moved not, and

his gaze was steadfastly fixed on the cross of the Redeemer.

“Seest thou not the Czar?” exclaimed Maluta Skuratoff, after a few moments of suspense: “holy father, he awaits thy blessing.”

The old man turned a glance full of sorrow upon the monarch as he spoke.

“No! I cannot, under such a garb, recognise the lawful Czar of Russia. Oh! prince, we here offer sacrifice to a God of mercy, whilst the blood of innocent Christians is poured forth by the hands of cruelty and rapacity, and even sprinkles our holy temples and our altars. Never have the dominions of a Christian monarch been so cruelly desolated. Even among Pagans and Infidels we find laws, justice, and humanity; but these exist not in Russia. The lives and property of citizens have here no safety! Murder, robbery, and every crime, are committed in the name of the Czar. You sit upon a throne, but remember there is a higher throne, before which you must one day appear, stained

with the blood of the just, and deafened with their accusing cries. Oh, prince! I speak unto thee as the pastor of souls, fearing my God alone.”

The Czar, trembling with rage, struck the pavement of the temple furiously with his baton, and cried out with a terrible voice,—
“Audacious monk! I have spared thee too long. Rebel as thou art, from this day thou shalt find me such as thou hast represented me.”

If the hand of the Czar was restrained from the murder of Philip on the spot, the presence of the multitude, over which the prelate was known to hold a sway more revered than his own, arrested his purpose.

As he turned to depart, the sight of Repnin, at the foot of the altar, that Boyar who had dared, in the midnight revel, to resent the insult offered to his dignity by dashing the disgraceful mask to the ground, encountered him.

At a signal the dagger of Maluta was plunged into his heart—awful incense from a murderer to his God!

With a threatening look the Czar left the blood-stained chancel. The days of massacre had come again.

CHAPTER VIII.

“Elisée Bomélius, cet exécrationnable calomniateur, cet indigne médecin dont nous avons déjà fait mention, proposa au tzar d’employer le poison pour exterminer ses ennemis, et composa, dit-on, un breuvage mortel avec un art si infernal, que l’homme empoisonné expirait précisément à l’instant indiqué par le tyran.”—KARAMSIN, vol. ix. p. 235.

“Quelquefois, apercevant près du palais une troupe de citoyens paisiblement rassemblés, il faisait lâcher deux ou trois ours et riait aux éclats de l’épouvante, des cris de cette multitude en fuite, poursuivie par les bêtes féroces, qui déchiraient quelques malheureux.”—IDEM, vol. ix. p. 206.

A REMARKABLE adventurer, branded for his infamy in his native land, Elias Bomelius, a Dutch Jew, had gained access to the Czar in the capacity of physician, and had succeeded, by intrigue, in obtaining his favour and confidence. It was he who encouraged in the

tyrant's breast every dreadful suspicion, maligning the Boyars and the people, was the ready informer of revolts and seditions, and the eager purveyor of the fury of the Czar. Leagued with a few of the nobility, such as the Basmanoffs, in his execrable pursuit, woe to the unfortunate family whose wealth or rank excited the insatiate cupidity of the Jew! He had amassed untold wealth; he had acquired an influence over the monarch, which amounted almost to a magic spell, and his displeasure was the death-warrant of whomsoever it fell upon. In evil as in good, sovereigns have zealous servants, and for the curse of Muscovy, Bomelius was but too willing to profit by the blood-thirsty disposition of his employer.

Hitherto his speculations had been limited to individual rapine, but now he aspired to loftier game, and sought the monarch with an infernal project.

It was a propitious moment for the execrable

machinations of the Jew. Ivan, writhing under the reproaches of the metropolitan, infuriated by the audacity of the prelate in the presence of the multitude, was ready to wreak his vengeance by the commission of any atrocity. But he dared not yet lay a hand upon the priest, now more than ever beloved and respected by the people. He only suspended the blow, to strike the more securely.

A fearful smile of satisfaction came over his countenance on the appearance of Bomelius, as he lay revolving in his mind the means he should employ for vengeance.

“Welcome, thou trusty Bomelius! thou art arrived opportunely to assist me in quieting this rebel priest.”

“The talents of thy poor servant are subservient to thy will.”

“Have I not heard thee say that the princes of the west have other means than the sword of dispatching their enemies? We would not

deal too roughly with this crafty priest. Now, in the store-house of thy learning, hast thou not some cunning device would rid us of his presence?"

Bomelius paused, and cast a furtive glance at the Czar, to ascertain, if possible, the reward attached to the revelation of the deadly secret he possessed. Then cautiously commencing,

" 'Tis matter of my knowledge, though not my practice. A clue I have to such a compound as shall serve thy need. A beverage, 'tis in my power to concoct, which, taken in given ratio and proportions, shall bring to him who drinks thereof a certain death, at such season and moment as shall please your majesty. But I have now presumed to venture into your majesty's presence, impelled by my ever watchful solicitude for your safety. I have notice of extensive rebellion in your city of Novogorod. A faithful subject found this secret correspondence with the Polish king."

The Czar seized upon the forged epistles, and the doom of Novogorod was sealed.

When Ivan, at the head of his butcher-legion, left the fortress of the slobode Alexandroffsky, and dispatched a van-guard on the Novogorod road with orders to slay every one they encountered, under pretext that the expedition was one of secrecy, the peaceable citizens of Moscow gave themselves up to the festivities of the Easter week, with more zest than their loyalty should have warranted in the absence of their sovereign, and his minions the Opritchnina.

A large reservoir was erected, filled with a hundred hogsheads of mead; the steps leading up to it were piled with loaves of bread, hams, fowls, and geese. Then, at an appointed signal, came the rush of the people to scramble for eatables, and in a moment the steps were cleared for the amateurs of the wine-basin, who "weltered in it till the whole was consumed."

Here were booths erected, with a display of

painted representations of the saints : the vendors eluding the prohibition of the sale of them, by asking no price, but not parting with them till the bidders had laid down a tempting value.

At another spot were boxing matches, the boxers wearing stiff mittens, and though displaying little science, occasionally inflicting serious punishment.

Farther on, a group of girls were linking together a dance, something after the manner of the game of thread the needle ; whilst others attracted beholders by the more graceful evolutions of the golubetz dance.

Peasants playing at the game of swatka, and others at babki and skittles ; whilst the majority repaired to the amusement of the katcheli, or swings, which were on various principles, and in great number.

The dresses of the citizens gave a lively effect to the scene. Here and there a Bashkir in his dress of nettles and Asiatic slippers ; now

a Tartar woman of Kazan in a robe of fine cloth embroidered with gold, her bonnet covered with coins and medals affixed to it one over the other like the scales of a fish ; or a damsel of the Nagai tribe, with rings in her ears, and one so large in her nose that it touched her lips. Others again from the Khabardan frontier, proud of their carrotty hair ; or the more imposing costume of the females of Kalouga, whose brilliant and lofty head-dress was studded with pearls and jewels, wearing a jerkin of crimson silk bordered with gold, over a brocaded petticoat.

But the stiff coif of the Moscow belles lost none of its attraction in the comparison ; and the long chains of pearls and precious stones that wound about it were of extreme richness, whilst the Tartarian veil of tissue of silk, silver, and gold, secured to it, and thrown back upon the shoulder, gave dignity to their step.

A knot of these goodly ladies had assembled in animated discussion.

“Hast heard the news, sister?”

“What news?” said a rather knowing-looking beldame, whose coif stood fiercely out like a jockey’s cap.

“The Czar marries!”

“Marries? Have we not a Czarina?”

“Aye! aye! but she has outlived his pleasure; and now we are to have a royal wedding, after the good old Muscovite fashion—a general muster of all the pretty women for his majesty’s choice.”

“Dost call that news? I have known it this week past,” continued the knowing one; which was an advantage, certainly, considering that the Czar himself had not thought of it till the preceding day.

“Thy lass will be enrolled, no doubt,” continued the other.

“Of a verity, I hope so; for it is not every day the girls have such a windfall: besides, I do think she has a good chance; for though I say

it, that should not, there's not a bonnier one in Moscow. But of a surety thou wilt send thy daughter likewise, not that she has much chance for the Czar himself; but then thou knowest he bestows his leavings upon his favourites, and who can say but that, she may win the Czarevitch, or the handsome young Boyar, Basmanoff, or"

"Tut! tut! how thy tongue goes," interrupted the knowing one, somewhat indignant that the chance of her own child should be rated for any personage of inferior degree to his majesty: "dost compare thy ghost-looking, ferret-eyed lass to mine? Why it costs thee a grivna a-week for flour to hide her sallow cheeks; and were it not for the stuffing, thou mightst as well clap a petticoat on a broomstick."

Spite the cake of white paste and rouge that was baked upon her cheek, the blood of the indignant matron was seen to mantle there;

and fearful might have been the conflict, had not the indignant dames at that moment found other matters to engage their attention.

His majesty had scarcely left the gates of the slobode Alexandroffsky, bent on the punishment of the rebellious city of Novogorod, than he bethought himself of the festivities in his goodly city of Moscow; and ordering a select number of his escort to accompany him, retraced his steps, and very privately entered the Kremlin.

From the gothic windows he surveyed the vast assemblage of citizens. The fair was at its height. Thousands were enjoying the innocent recreations, and confidence and security reigned in the heart of the multitude, for the tacit pledge was the supposed absence of the Czar on his expedition with the whole force of the Opritchnina.

Now it is, or should be, known, that his majesty, with a very northern predilection, preserved within the precincts of the palace a breed

of Novogorod bears, then noted above those of the other provinces for their savage and ferocious nature. The idea of the sport was irresistible, and the tyrant ordered them to be let loose upon the crowd.

To the merriment, the joke, the laugh, and conviviality of the multitude, in a moment succeeded the shrieks of terror and the cries of suffering humanity, whilst a rush was made in all directions to escape. In a few minutes desolation reigned over the immense area, and of all that holiday concourse of people, there remained but the mutilated and dying victims of the sport of the Cæsar of the north, whilst the loud laugh, from the windows of the palace, testified the lusty merriment of the blood-hunters.

Shall we now follow the tyrant on his errand of vengeance to the doomed citizens of his loyal city of Novogorod? We pause and shudder.

Our limits compel us to pass over all the detail ; 'tis a merciful apology to the reader.

The advanced guard of the Czar arrived at Novogorod. Their first care was to surround the city with strong barricades, that not a man might escape. They began by closing the churches and convents, and hanging such of the priests and monks as would not pay twenty roubles each for their lives. They placed the houses of the rich under seal, whilst the merchants, lawyers, and others, were imprisoned. The silence of horror seized the inhabitants, who could not conceive the cause of this dreadful visitation. Ivan arrived four days after his advanced guard. The archbishop met him on the bridge, with the remaining clergy, and the holy relics. The Czar heaped upon him only reproaches.

“ You are not,” said he, “ the shepherd of Christians, but a perfidious destroying wolf. I

know the treasonable projects of yourself and this vile population. You wish to give your city to Sigismund Augustus.”

He then ordered him to carry back the crucifix and images to the cathedral of St. Sophia. He himself followed and heard mass. He prayed fervently; then went to the bishop's palace, and sat down to dinner with his Boyars. All at once he arose, and uttered a frightful cry. At this signal his satellites appeared; they seized the archbishop, his officers, and servants. The palace and even the cathedral were pillaged. The treasure, the sacred vessels, the images, and bells, were taken away. Then began the judgment of Ivan and his son. Each day from 500 to 1000 Novogodians were brought before them, and tortured or burned, by means of a combustible composition; others, tied to sledges by the hands or feet, were dragged to the banks of the river Volkhof, and precipitated from the bridges by whole families—wives with their

husbands, mothers with their children. This massacre lasted five weeks, and ended with a general pillage. The Czar himself traversed the streets, to see his greedy and blood-thirsty soldiers force open houses and warehouses, scale windows, and seize upon the property of the citizens.

The Czar next summoned before him such of the inhabitants of distinction as still survived. They appeared more like spectres than men. The vengeance of Ivan seemed assuaged for the present.

“Inhabitants of Novogorod,” said he, “whose lives are yet preserved, return in peace to your homes. Let the Almighty judge the traitor archbishop and his accomplices ; they are answerable for the bloodshed in your city. Go ! pray God to grant us a happy reign. Pray for our soldiers, the faithful servants of Jesus Christ.”

The number of persons who perished in Novogorod and its environs is estimated at 60,000.

Ivan having dispatched to Moscow the immense booty he had amassed, directed his march upon Pskoff, the inhabitants of which city he included in the supposed treason of those of Novogorod. Thus perished the innocent population of the second metropolis of Russia—Novogorod the Great was a desert. The dead bodies could not receive the rites of Christian sepulchre. In the cemetery of the Church of the Nativity, more than 10,000 bodies were deposited, without those rites, in deep pits dug for that purpose. The river Volkhof was choked up with them, and famine and pestilential disease soon followed to fill up the measure of their calamities.

Where is the history which holds up to execration a similar monster? Nero burned the city of Rome, and destroyed multitudes, but he did it not at the foot of the altar. He knew not the hypocrisy of shedding the blood of the innocents in the name of the Almighty. He

was ignorant of a God of mercy and benevolence, and of a Messiah, sent to preach peace and righteousness of life, and forgiveness even to those who injure us. It was left for the Muscovite tyrant to refine upon his cruelties; to pray that he might murder, to murder that he might pray. To bow his knee before his God and his Saviour, and whilst in the very act, to issue to his slaves his orders for instant imprisonment and assassination. To pray to a God of love and justice, and to him who said, "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another," whilst his heart was filled with deadly hate and revenge; and, finally, to clothe himself in the humble monastic garb, and heap ashes on his head, only to retire immediately afterwards to wine, revelry, and the most disgusting debauch.

CHAPTER IX.

“ On amena au tzar, dans la slobode Alexandroffsky des jeunes filles de toutes les villes de l’empire, sans distinction de naissance, et au nombre de plus de deux mille. . . . il en choisit d’abord vingt-quatre, et parmi celles-ci, douze que le médecin et les sages-femmes eurent l’ordre de visiter.”
—KARAMSIN, vol. ix. p. 233.

“ I cannot so well liken them as to a miller’s wife, for they looke as though they were beaten about the face with a bagge of meale.”—PURCHAS, HIS PILGRIMAGE.

THE Granovitaia Palata, that ancient and vast audience chamber of the Kremlin, never was before, nor since, more beautifully adorned, than when Ivan re-entered it after his return from Novogorod. Even the vestibule, and the steps to it, were lined with the fairest forms and loveliest faces. A thousand beaming eyes shed their

radiance upon the monarch. A thousand hearts, from the confines of the Oural to the banks of the Dnieper, from Astracan to the Baltic, palpitated. All that was lovely and beautiful had come to win the Czarina crown. No seraglio of the East, not the houris of Mahomet's dream, ever rivalled the beauty there. Wherever turned the monarch's gaze, more charming was the object, till the bewildered senses revelled in that garden of roses.

What dreams of glory and ambition lighted up the sparkling glances! What visions of triumph and pride flushed the cheek! What envy and emulation swelled the hearts of the multitude of charmers! How varied the display of feeling! The high-born daughter of a Kniaz beside the dressed-up offspring of an artisan. The serf-born child beside the heiress of a Boyar. All levelled before the epicurean monarch, and all aspiring alike to his hand. What speculation was, far and nigh, upon the

result! What dreams of fortune danced before the visionary minds of their parents, like him who has staked his all upon a chance, and builds his airy castles on imagined success.

What ambition was roused in the breasts of the needy, who blindly calculating on the prize, grasped in their mind the perquisites of their imaginary exaltation. In that perverted day, there were of those who warmed their hopes into certainty, who marked some wealthy enemy for persecution, and in their eagerness counted the booty that would fall to their lot, as the appanage of the Czarina's relations.

The father of one of the fair candidates, infatuated with the certainty of her glorious elevation, in the hour of death, and whilst as yet the Czar's choice was not known, made his will, and when asked for the treasures he had bequeathed, "The booty of the executioner," he replied, alluding to his claim as the father of the Czarina, and breathed his last.

Calmly the monarch surveyed the hall of angelic faces, forms that moved in grace and fascination, eyes that looked hope, fear, passion, and dismay. For there were spirits of purity in that bright throng, the submissive children to fate; there were young and true hearts, pledged to other love, who hoped not for the prize, and would have yielded their chances of royalty to crown with love the secret sovereign of their hearts.

On passed the Czar, and before his imperial step the graceful forms, retiring like the bright waves before the advancing vessel of state, compressing their sweet lips in mortification, or parting them in smiling hope, on the notice they received.

Again the monarch paced the hall of fairies. Embarrassed, dazzled, with the light of that halo, each beam still brighter than the last, his fastidious taste became more unsettled than before.

“What think’st thou, son? Each by herself would pass for beautiful; but there is sameness in it all. It seems as if nature had squared accounts with her handiwork, and balanced them forsooth. For instance, this one hath a roguish eye, which makes some amends for her pug-nose; and here again have we a little foot that’s an apology for the dumpy burthen upon it. Methinks had I the designing of a woman’s shape and face, a tolerable specimen of one might be turned out with the fractions of perfection doled out to the many.”

“What thinks your majesty of the brunette we have here?” remarked the Czarevitch.

“Thou hast a sharp eye, John. Mark her. In this wholesale fashion, ’tis impossible to decide. Good Basmanoff, we give thee charge of our present selection, which at more leisure we will further consider.”

“Beseech your majesty!” remarked Bome-lius, “your poor servant has some judgment

of the outward promise to the eye. Methinks the maiden here deserves your glance.”

The monarch good humouredly following the direction of the physician, beheld the daughter of the Boyar Basmanoff, and burst into a loud laugh.

“ Outward promise, indeed! Master Bome-lius! a peasant might make a meal from her cheeks, let alone the kisses. There’s as much flour as would make a loaf for an honest family. But we will see more of her, nevertheless. Tho’ to do that we must needs clear away the dough. Send her to the tub, good Bomelius, and do not spare the scrubbing brush. What sayest, worthy Basmanoff? are we not prudent in taking these precautions? who may the damsel be?”

“ Your unworthy servant’s daughter.”

“ Ah! ah! ah!” roared the monarch. “ And didst thou take me for a schoolboy, that I was to be caught with gingerbread? Faith, man, if there should prove a scarcity of corn, methinks

we'll tax the cheeks of our Moscow belles. There would be fine scrapings for the hungry. Now, by my sceptre, have we something here! good eyes, and teeth too, such as Heaven made them, white as snow. Match me that amongst those made-up wenches. Off with her to our private chamber. See, how she walks. None of your stilts, your high-heeled slippers, to stumble on her nose; yet do I warrant ye she would not leave a foot-print on the snow."

"Ha! Tcherkessian flower," said Ivan, as he recognised the costume of the beautiful girl; "thou hast travelled far for a husband, and hast brought something with thee, pretty one, in that roguish dimple. We will see more of thee."

"Ugh! what a cart-horse hast thou trotted here, Bomelius? What didst think of us when she enlisted? Turn her out man—there's more bone than we have relish for."

After a third ramble through the assemblage, he succeeded in making a selection of four-and-twenty, who were immediately withdrawn to the private apartments, to undergo a more close inspection by the appointed matrons; and twelve of that number having been vouched for as worthy of a sovereign's choice, they were remanded for a more separate, lengthened, and leisurely interview with the Czar.

Two thousand were dismissed, and returned home, to dispel the fond anticipations and interested hopes of their several relatives; whilst such of the expectant concourse who claimed relationship with the selected twelve, calculated, for a dead certainty, that their own competitor was now the living Czarina.

Of those who awaited with anxiety the result of the first inspection of the candidates for the hand of the Czar, was a person who would

have been the last to be suspected of any such interest—Maluta Skuratoff. An unknown adventurer, until the favour of the Czar shone upon him, nor rank, nor kindred could he boast; and now, except in the presence of his sovereign, his titled and well-born companions looked down upon him with withering contempt, and even in the presence of his majesty, many hesitated not, when he prided himself upon court favour, to exhibit their unmitigated contumely.

The monarch, who spared neither the shrine of virtue nor the sanctuary of the altar, who made the laws of God and man subservient to his excesses, tolerated with supine indifference the endless disputes on priority in his presence; and it would appear that the only subject on which he was undeviatingly consistent, was the reverence in which he held the prerogatives of rank.

The slaves to the despot, who witnessed, without a murmur, the extermination of their nearest kindred; who, under the lash and the knout, would exult in their sufferings, and call down Heaven's blessings upon their tyrant; who, with a prayer for his happiness, would unrepiningly bow to the executioner's axe, braved the presence of majesty in asserting their precedence. Such an anomaly of despotism and indulgence would appear incredible, if not traced to a deeper source. Ivan had sapped all nature's bulwarks to his safety. An artificial rampart alone, the blindfold prejudice of the age, and of by-gone generations, screened him from harm. And the stepping-stones to power, those minute gradations of rank and title, the baubles for which mankind scrambled, like sugar-plums scattered amongst children, divided and distanced the ambitious and discontented. From the summit, the autocrat's eagle eye singled out the

forward adventurers, who, like Sisyphus, as they reached the height, were dashed to earth again.

In vain did Maluta Skuratoff, in the duties of executioner to his majesty, pave the way for rank and precedence ; the monarch was deaf to his entreaties. Wealth and caresses he heaped upon his minion, but no title nor dignity ; and when Basmanoff, the Boyar's son, boldly refused to wait with Maluta at the royal table, the favourite of ignoble birth was made to feel that all the favour he had won was limited to the tyrant's wages, and now he studied the means of circumventing the disadvantage of his unknown origin.

Time soon held out a prospect of success to his schemes. Maluta was seen to fawn upon the proud Basmanoffs, to do the officious, and to pay them every deference and attention.

It was he who was the first harbinger of the joyful tidings of the elected twelve to the Boyarina, in which her child was included.

CHAPTER X.

“The emperor, notwithstanding these incursions, sends for all his nobles and gentlemen’s fairest daughters (virgins) thorow his kingdome, out of whom he chuseth a wife for himselfe, and another for his eldest sonne, Charewich Juane.”—PURCHAS HIS PILGRIMAGE.

“Il ne voulut jamais accorder le titre de Boyard à son plus cher favori, Maluta Skuratof, craignant de ravalier cette dignité suprême par la rapide élévation d’un homme de basse extraction.”—KARAMSIN.

THE Boyarinia Basmanoff reclined in regal state upon a couch gorgeously decorated. She was in a dishabille, and almost entirely concealed by a large scarf, under which she had gathered up her feet, and which was drawn from one shoulder towards the other by the hand, on which she rested her head. Her hair was care-

fully concealed under a coif of crimson velvet, (for, as a married woman, the display of it would have been considered an abomination by the orthodox Muscovite,) and left, fully displayed, a face remarkably pale, but of that troubled cast which bespeaks a vortex beneath the surface.

Her opulence was great. Her marriage dowry had brought no less than eight thousand serfs, which, joined to her husband's property, had given her unlimited sway over twenty thousand of her fellow-creatures. It was not for Gregoriovna Basmanoff to bear control, and her good spouse soon found that her management improved their estate so much, as to render any interference on his part altogether unnecessary.

Her inventive genius, indeed, had derived an unprecedented profit from her slaves. Muscovite lords had hitherto taxed only the labour of their serfs. Gregoriovna stripped them, short

of mutilation, of nature's gifts. The females of the estate were shorn of their hair so soon as the length of their tresses made them marketable; and neither sex was spared, when endowed with a beautiful set of teeth. If their dismembered bodies could have been made to yield more profit, she would have left nothing but the trunk, which, if the laws of the country had permitted, she would also have exported.

At times the proud Boyarina Basmanoff would suddenly start up. A restlessness was evident in her manner; and her attentive ear, expectant of some new sound of import, seemed eager to catch the slightest sound, as her head bent forwards.

“The hour is come—the moment big with fortune to our house. I see her, my daughter! even now at the foot of the throne. Amidst the galaxy of beauty, the ranks of loveliness from the remotest corners of Russia, competitors for the hand of our mighty Czar, behold!

his discerning eye is fixed upon her—he advances, he proclaims the daughter of Basmanoff, Czarina.

“Ha! what steps approach? ’Tis Maluta Skuratoff! He comes the joyful bearer of my realised hopes,” and the Boyarinia hastened to the door to meet him.

Bending his lofty stature as he passed through the low doorway, Skuratoff did, indeed, at that moment, appear magnificent. The dress of the dashing legionist of the Opritchnina was superb. The sabre, the gift of his sovereign, was refulgent with gems; and his broad athletic person displayed the costly ochaben, which surmounted the crimson and glittering caftan. The Czar’s favourite was in the prime of life. His beard was glossy, dark, and luxuriant, and fell in graceful curls upon his ample chest, and happily served sometimes as a veil to a countenance agitated by ungovernable and disgraceful passions. His dark brows shaded eyes of

the deepest black, that, but for their expression, would have been handsome; but they were so often lit up with a fury which none could control, that even in their quiescent light, they divulged the fires of ferocity and revenge, which were smothered for a moment, within.

The deferential ceremony of introducing himself without omitting any prescribed formality would have been dispensed with, but that it served to recall the Boyarinia to a sense of her own dignity. The favourite of the Czar was fortune's minion, and from obscurity had been raised to office, but not to rank—and the base-born Maluta Skuratoff well knew, that the most contemptible noble of the realm claimed precedence and submission of him, 'spite the monarch's favour; and as he now stood in presence of one of the highest ladies of the land, it was perhaps with some secret pleasure that he did not omit a tittle of those complimentary

punctilios and submissive bowings due to her ladyship.

“ Now, speak, Maluta,” said the Boyarinia ; “ is the election made ?—my daughter !”

“ Not yet, fair lady, but the ranks of aspiring beauties are wonderfully thinned ; for of the two thousand damsels who started for the imperial crown, all, except twelve, are distanced. They alone remain, the *élite*, to wait the decision of the Czar.”

“ And my daughter is one of these ?”

“ Undoubtedly,” resumed Maluta ; “ and in my humble opinion, she stands pre-eminent in beauty. The Czar, methinks, will have no hesitation, and your daughter will surely be his bride.”

So eager is the human breast to receive flattering hopes of the fulfilment of its own desires, that the Boyarinia already measured her ascendant star. An awful spoil awaited the relatives

of the elected bride—the plunder of the dead; the forfeited goods of the proscribed and condemned; and as temptation is ever busy about the ambitious, and leads to crimes of the deadliest hue, so did the Boyarinia contemplate the profitable game, whilst revenge marked for inheritance the worldly goods of those she hated. As the contemplation of such success suspended for a moment her inquiries, the door of the apartment was thrown open. A group of persons appeared, in the centre of which was the daughter of the Boyarinia, now returned from the palace, after the first review of the candidates for the hand of his Czarine majesty.

She was supported by her handmaids, for her person, slight and delicate, appeared faint from the fatigue she had undergone, and cushions having been arranged, she sunk upon them, pale and exhausted.

Katinka Basmanoff was splendidly attired. Her opachen was fringed with costly pearls; her

kaftan yielding to her quick breathing, revealed the golden tissue of Yana, which was resplendent with jewels. All that art and wealth could bestow was lavished upon the Muscovite maid, to win the Czar.

But her beauty, for beautiful she was, was not of that cast which was the fashion of the times. She was somewhat too slight, too pale; and though, according to the custom of her country, she was highly rouged, her countenance was of that order which could receive no increase of attraction from artificial embellishment. The whiteness of her polished skin required not the aid of cosmetics; and the paint lavished to embellish, transformed her loveliness into caricature.

Maluta, as he stood at a respectful distance, and intently gazed upon her, was conscious that this artificial mask to her loveliness would, by defeating her success with the Czar, secure her for himself. He needed all the hypocrisy he

was master of, to conceal the ambitious designs he entertained relative to the high-born daughter of the Basmanoffs. It was he who had cautiously advised the abundant use of adjuncts to her charms, well aware that every application of them would conceal her loveliness the more effectually. As the confidential favourite of his prince, he was supposed to know his imperial master's taste, and he had accordingly dwelt upon the Czar's predilection for high colour, until the delicate cheek of the youthful Katinka was made to wear a bloom that might vie with the hue of the beet-root.

He was not, however, without some fear, lest, even thus disfigured, his lord's practised eye should discover the charms he thus laboured to conceal; for independently of her face, there was an exquisite gracefulness in her person, which could not be robed from view; whilst his own passion for the lovely girl filled him with disquietude and perplexing doubt, whether some

other competitor might haply be found on whom the imperial choice would fall.

The reflections of Maluta were now interrupted by the arrival of the physician of the court, the Dutch Jew, Bomelius. A slight recognition passed between them, as the Boyarina dismissed Skuratoff, and welcomed the opportune call of the doctor.

“ Give you joy, noble lady,” said the newcomer, with a smile on his countenance. “ The Czar looked with more than ordinary pleasure on your lovely daughter, as she was included in the number of the elect ; nor do I entertain a doubt that she will be the chosen one. Her noble birth, her beauty, and her youth, will secure the conquest.”

“ I have no fears for the result,” whispered the Boyarina, as they retired to the farthest end of the apartment, “ provided the English girl is not one of the competitors.”

“ And be tranquil ; as yet the Czar has had

no clue to her rival, and the girl's father, imbued with the prejudice of his countrymen, seeks not an alliance with our mighty sovereign. She is as yet unknown to the caterers for the Czar's nuptial couch."

"Friend! but should the beauty of Grace Wilmington become known, I cannot conceal it from myself, that lovely as is my own daughter, I fear the English girl would bear away the diadem."

"We have our remedy," answered Bomelius, in a subdued voice, "a never-failing remedy;" and a glance of intelligence was exchanged.

"When do the candidates assemble again?" inquired the lady.

"'Tis believed to-morrow. An earlier hour would have been appointed, but tidings of the arrival of some unknown beauty from the provinces, whom report says is to surpass them all, has delayed proceedings. She is expected to-night."

“ Her name ?”

“ Marfa—her family name I remember not ; some obscure tradesman’s child, whom report, oft-times more false than true,” added Bomelius, as he watched the anxious countenance of the Boyarinia, “ has pronounced of exquisite beauty.”

“ But should she surpass my child ?”

“ Of what avail ?” said Bomelius, lowering the tone of his voice till it was solely audible to the Boyarinia. “ Of what avail ? trust to the resources of my art ; no cheek but that of thy own child shall receive the lawful caress of Muscovy’s lord. If—(and in my capacity at the court, my glance is the first to welcome and approve the aspirants to the hand of our sovereign)—if she prove a dangerous rival, behold ! my unerring hand shall touch her cheek with such a fearful bane, that beauty shall be swiftly scared away, and nought remain but such repulsive hue and mien as shall cool the ardent lover.”

The Boyarinia seemed to revive again.

“Thy daughter’s success is sure, nor need she fear a competitor,” continued the Dutch physician.

To explain the interest Bomelius took in the success of the Russian lady, would require more pages devoted to past intrigue than would compensate the reader; but as a summary, it may be observed, that wealth and power were the springs of action in both, and that their united efforts were more likely to attain their darling object than any single individual attempt.

Her daughter once seated on the throne of Russia, the mother saw before her a wide field wherein to exercise her speculative talents, which, aided by the profound arts and villany of Bomelius, promised a golden harvest. Executions, proscriptions, and confiscations, were the means by which both these worthies hoped

to rise to riches vast as their desires, and fearing a paucity of real offenders, they contemplated how far their united machinations might entrap the unwary, betray the confiding, and calumniate the innocent, whenever a rich booty was to be obtained. Thus stimulated, knowing how much each one was necessary to the other, no wonder these amiable friends progressed so lovingly together.

It was not long before Theodore Basmanoff made his appearance, and confirmed the news brought by the preceding visitors; although his account was more honestly qualified with a reiteration of the jokes which the Czar had bestowed on his sister's toilette. In consequence thereof the poor girl was sentenced to undergo such a process of scouring from all artificial addition, that it was little short of flaying, the ambitious Boyarinia superintending the operation, and applying the necessary in-

strument obtained from the birch-tree, in the national flagellation, whenever symptoms of disinclination made their appearance.

But the Boyarinia had other matter to debate upon, and closeting herself with the dashing heir of her house, imparted to him the intelligence of the expected beauty, whom report said was likely to rival her own child.

“She comes from Nijni-Novogorod, and is expected hourly. One Marfa”——

“Sabakin !” added Theodore ; “a mere shopkeeper’s daughter. I have heard of her.”

“Sabakin ! saidst thou,” resumed the Boyarinia. “Theodore, I like not the precursors of this said damsel. How comes it that her name is learned by rote ? That thou and others rehearse it ? Had she been noble-born, it had been no wonder ; but a trumpery stall-keeper’s child from the provinces, to send her fame before her, like a courier, as if to bid the monarch wait ere he decide, as if the plebeian

hussy said, 'I am thy destined bride!' 'Sdeath! but she must be no common beauty.'

"Tut! tut! a mere rumour of spite, got up by the mortified lasses that have been rejected."

"Hum! There is something in that, Theodore. It frets me to know the truth of it."

"That will soon be proved. She is expected this very night."

"And evening comes apace," observed the Boyarinia, musing. "What if I wished to hear the tidings sooner?"

"Unless we went to meet her, I do not see how that were possible."

"Thou hast it, Theodore," hastily rejoined his mother, as with nice tact she thus brought him to suggest himself her own wishes.

"What sayst thou, true son of mine; suppose thou didst select some dozen trusty fellows of thy troop, and, being well armed, didst watch for them as the girl and her cortège

approached the city. Or, by some apparent hazard, trick them of their speed; then seize your opportunity to note this forward beauty.”

“ Good sport, indeed, good mother !”

“ ’Twere good, indeed, if thou didst spoil *her* sport. And if she prove as comely as report doth say, ’twould spare me some anxiety if thou couldst mar her chance, were it but for a day.”

“ Why, mother ! thou shouldst have been a man; yet then thou hadst not been blessed with such a promising offspring. I see your meaning.”

“ And fear not. This capricious lover, if he see her not, will make his choice forthwith. The love of your old men is like over-ripe fruit, it will not wait the plucking. So she come a day after the fair, it will save me the trouble of marring that beauty, which now ’twere dangerous for men to look upon.”

The young Boyar at once embracing the

views of his worldly-minded parent, and at the same time gratifying his own disposition for adventure, speedily summoned a trusty escort, and was on the road.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Les Cossacques attaquaient les marchands et même les ambassadeurs Asiatiques qui se rendaient à Moscow; ils allaient jusqu’à piller le trésor du tzar.”—KARAMSIN, vol. ix. p. 480.

“ Ils avaient établi, depuis Kasan sur le Volga jusqu’ auprès du Caucase, des postes de brigands, à qui les voyageurs, les commerçans et les personnages les plus distingués, les mieux escortés, ne pouvaient échapper.”—LESUR, HISTOIRE DES KOSAQUES.

Hoïda! Cossacque! Hoïdé!

Hourra!

The foremost have the sack—

Huzza!

What! though we slay a Turk, or Pole,

We take his goods to save his soul!

Hourra!

Hoïda! Cossacque! Hoïdé!

Hourra!

The foeman’s hold our course,

Huzza!

The fight, the battle-field, the sack !
 Or by the Czar, he's no Cossacque !
 Hourra !

Hoïda ! Cossacque ! Hoïdé !
 Hourra !

A forage for the prey—
 Huzza !

A schnapps to Russia's *Oto-Czar* !
 Our Hetman and marauding war !
 Hourra !

Such was the burthen of the wild and lawless song, given in hearty chorus by a body of horsemen, who were proceeding at a leisurely pace over an extensive plain which lay between the city of Nijni-Novogorod and Moscow. They were in number about three hundred, and would have been formidable to any troop of equal force. Long pistols, supported by their belts, daggers, swords, and lances, composed their martial weapons ; whilst some, without appearing encumbered with such a multiplicity of instruments of destruction, held a short whip for the purpose of flagellating their steeds. In other respects, their equipment being so va-

rious, it would require a description of each of the equestrians to convey a correct idea of the whole, such a variety of European and Asiatic costume and equipment was there exhibited. The foremost horseman of the party, however, whom we may conjecture to be the leader, was somewhat more carefully arrayed, and displayed a countenance strongly expressive of intelligence and warlike ardour.

By their reckless bearing, their warlike equipment, and varied accoutrements, the Cossacques, the dreaded Cossacques, were known at a glance. Those warriors, who had spread from the shores of the Caspian to the Dnieper, from Trebisond to the Baikal, and whose renown was to extend to our own age, coupled with enterprise, danger, and success.

Formed by hardy habits [for toil and warfare, which developed their persons to advantage, a peculiar mode of inoculation, practised amongst them from a very remote period, had

preserved them from that defacing scourge of the human race, the small-pox. To these causes may be traced that manly beauty which at that period characterised the hardy warriors of the Don.

Fugitives, and daring spirits from various nations, first formed the ranks of these bold marauders. It is not therefore to be wondered at that a hero sprung up occasionally amongst them; and that as their increasing numbers made them more formidable, whole countries trembled at their approach, or eagerly sought their assistance, in an age of direful contentions and incessant wars.

The Greek religion was their adopted faith; and to this circumstance may be attributed that support and preference, which Russia so often found in her troubles, from these vagrant troops, which she could not find in those of any other nation. And to their powerful aid, if we trace the acquisitions of Russia since she emerged

from barbarism, much may be set down as gained by the support of these valiant auxiliaries. Treated at first as robbers, outlaws, and barbarians, Russia soon learned a different policy towards them. She was not long in discovering that as friends they would be invaluable; as enemies, continually harassing her, and flying at the approach of her armies; severely felt, but never to be found. As their position occupied the extreme south, and south-west, of the Russian empire, they formed, as allies, a formidable barrier against the Turk and the Pole.

At the time to which we refer, the Cossacques, by their daring attacks, surprises, miraculous escapes, and retreats, were the admiration of the romancers of the day, and synonymous with their name was the sorcerer and the magician.

At length even the pusillanimous Czar was roused to a sense of his country's degradation by their daring exploits, for the treasures of

the crown had not escaped them. But vain, hitherto, had been his measures to suppress them.

The Cossacque, on his nimble and hardy steed, defied pursuit; and in the desert waste, in the lonely steppe, or the boundless forest, the stars of night for his faithful guides, the wilderness was ever his ready home.

Of such were the troop who now, on the decline of the day, were walking their steeds in the direction of Moscow.

A sudden command from their leader having enjoined silence, it was observed that something was slowly gaining upon them in their rear. As it drew nearer, it proved to be an arbas, or travelling waggon, covered with an awning of red cloth, and escorted by several mounted boors.

But the escort of the arbas, having advanced to reconnoitre the formidable troop, was somewhat dismayed at the appearance of a corps of the

redoubtable Cossacques ; and had it not been for the leader of this formidable troop, who himself turned from the ranks, and met the alarmed escort half-way, they would undoubtedly have suspended their progress, to allow of further distance between their respective parties.

The hetman, however, of the troop, in a courteous manner, allayed the fears of the travellers, and ordering his warriors to rein in, disposed them right and left of the road, in such order as to allow the arbas a free passage.

“ A safe journey to the city,” was the friendly salute he gave a horseman who appeared the leader of the travelling cortège ; “ though, I fear me, ’twill be night ere you reach the suburbs.”

“ Thanks ! thanks !” returned the horseman, whose dress denoted opulence but not rank, for the low fur cap which he wore was indicative of the plebeian : and he spurred after the arbas, still dubious of the honesty or the courtesy of

the Cossacque, who now followed up to take again the lead of his troop, to the evident disquietude of the Muscovite.

“We are bound for the same haven,” continued the warrior of the Don; “and if my company be welcome, I will even take the advance of my companions, and see you safe to the boundary wall.”

If the traveller had dared to speak truly, most assuredly it would not have proved complimentary to the Cossacque; but an involuntary deference for the various propensities of these notorious adventurers, compelled him to adopt a courteous demeanour, and his cold assent, had it been strictly noticed, indicated no particular penchant for the society of these knights of the sabre and lance.

Taking the word in its honest meaning, the soldier, without further invitation, gave his commands to the troop, and following up at the speed of the travellers, they soon distanced

the dreaded corps, which in some degree quieted the fears of the Muscovite, who notwithstanding kept at a cautious distance from the formidable hetman, who, perfectly at his ease, endeavoured to keep up the conversation with the usual remarks upon the weather, and upon the insecurity of the roads.

“Have there been any depredations committed of late by the banditti that used to infest this neighbourhood about two years since, when I last travelled this way?”

“God be praised!” exclaimed, with some satisfaction, his companion, “not since the bandit Koltzo, the Coss”——

“Don’t stand upon ceremony, friend; thou wouldst say, Koltzo, the Cossacque,” said the hetman, who, unconsciously, had reined his horse nearer to the traveller. But whether it was fear, produced by his own lapse, which had so much of personality in it, or the movement of the Cossacque towards him, which unnerved

him, we are at a loss to say; at that moment, however, he shouted lustily for help.

The boors in a moment surrounded him, and the shriek of a woman from the arbas added to the confusion. But the hetman, not deigning to notice the threatening attitude of the men, trotted up to the arbas, and perceiving, through the folds of the awning, a young female,

“Lady,” said he, “be not alarmed; here are none but friends. I have some knowledge of the dangers of this vicinity at night-fall, and seeing you but ill escorted,” he continued, regarding somewhat contemptuously the dismayed boors, “I have volunteered my services for your safety, and, in pledge of my sincerity, do, I beseech you, take custody of this sword, lest the sight of it should make your brave protectors ill at ease. Should there be need of it in your behalf, then will I urge you, fair maiden, to restore it me, for methinks I could make more diligence with the use of it than the

snow-white hand which receives it, and which I do opine is not much practised in the toil.”

Presenting the hilt, the delicate and trembling fingers of a young girl mechanically took possession of it. The cortège resumed its wonted pace, and the escort, as if cowed into submission, trotted on, the hetman resuming his position beside the apparent master of it.

“Thou wast speaking of Koltzo, friend, the Cossacque; dost remember what fate befel him?”

Awed by the commanding tone of the speaker, his courteous and magnificent bearing, his manly and handsome person, the Muscovite answered, with a mixed feeling of fear and respect,

“I have not heard, nor is it likely we should hear of him again. He was concerned in pillaging the Czar’s transports, and is under sentence of death. So I wot he will never show his face again in these parts. But observe! we are close to our halting station,” remarked the

Muscovite, as he espied the huts of a small village, and in a few minutes they arrived at the isba, over the door of which was the primitive hospitable sign of a branch, inviting the weary traveller to shelter. Here we shall leave them a while, in order to keep pace with the events more or less pertaining to our story, and for a short space return to the dwelling of our much-respected countryman, Walter Wilmington, and his daughter.

CHAPTER XII.

“The secretary to Randolph, who was sent as ambassador from Queen Elizabeth, was a person of the name of George Tuberville. He appears to have been a young man of fashion at that time.”—CLARKE’S TRAVELS, vol. i. p. 106.

“Il n’est sorte de ruses, de détours, de manèges qu’il n’employât pour obtenir la main de cette princesse (Elizabeth d’Angleterre).”—ANECDOTES SECRETES DE LA COUR DE RUSSIE, vol. i. p. 131 ; 1792.

AN important and delicate mission had been intrusted to Sir Thomas Randolph by his sovereign. He was commissioned to decline the honour which his imperial majesty of Russia had proposed to confer upon his free-born countrywomen, by taking to wife the daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon. This mission, how-

ever, had been forestalled by the return of the Czar's own ambassador; and the wrath of the despot was roused against all the British subjects within his dominions.

Time passed, and still the Czar had not signified his will to admit the British embassy to another audience. But Randolph, whose spirit was truly English, regarded not this indirect affront of the autocrat, and faithful to his duty, pursued the right and straightforward career of a British statesman, which has seldom failed to be more than a match for the tortuous intrigue of foreign politicians of that, and of a later day.

Sir Thomas Randolph was a man of no ordinary appearance. The queen of the most chivalrous court of the age was not likely to bestow favours of distinction upon men of mere hereditary consequence. The representatives of England's queen might well be expected to possess qualities worthy of their mistress's ser-

vice. The delicate mission intrusted to Sir Thomas needed the statesman, the gentleman, and the courtier. These rare qualities were happily blended in the mind and person of Sir Thomas Randolph. He was one of those favoured mortals who stand forth from the multitude, and despite envy and untoward circumstances, clear for themselves a path to fortune and renown. Sir Thomas aspired not in vain. Young, handsome, and of a noble and commanding mien, it needed but the proofs of that intelligence which fortune had already enabled him to give, to distinguish him as one worthy to receive the delicate charge of approaching, with an unwelcome message, the autocrat of Russia.

It was no small addition to the pleasure which Sir Thomas received on his appointment, to anticipate that of meeting with his old and valued friend Wilmington.

The polish and accomplishments of the

courtier blended well with the refinement of the man of science, such as Walter Wilmington, an ornament to his profession, to his country, and to mankind. Deeply read in the lore of the day, the doctor was actuated by a noble and generous impulse in his pursuits, the love of his fellow-creatures.

Through scenes of bloodshed and heartless tyranny, the unwearying physician had kept on his philanthropic course, the friend of humanity. Ever sickening at the atrocities he witnessed around him, yet ever bestowing his assiduities and care upon his suffering fellow-creatures, and administering, with professional skill and Christian charity, relief to the body and consolation to the mind of thousands, who inwardly bestowed blessings on the heretic, forbidden by a bigoted priesthood.

The charm of the doctor's society was heightened by that of his lovely daughter, Grace Wilmington. Early a widower, his companion to

the city of the Czar was the only child of his marriage. Debarred by absence from her country and friends, from intercourse with society, and few of the English settlers being of a class to form companions for the man of science, she had comparatively led the life of a recluse. But however circumscribed might have been her notions of the world, her mind had more than ordinary expansion, and taught in the leisure hours of her parent to soar to the vast regions of science, a beautiful world of her own existed in her pure mind, whilst, by her father's care, she was kept aloof, and secluded from the sight and knowledge of the foul deeds which troubled the unhappy country they were for a season doomed to inhabit. Her joyous and buoyant spirits ever refreshed the heart of the physician, as he oft returned to his secluded home, with an aching breast, and shuddering at those atrocities of which he was a daily spectator.

It entered not the mind of the doctor, that the gallant knight of the court of the magnificent Elizabeth would ever stoop to bestow more than ordinary attention upon the unsophisticated girl of his exclusive rearing. His child's devoted affection to him, and her artlessness, secured his possession of her confidence, whilst the high character of Sir Thomas was a guarantee for that unreserved welcome he gave him to the sacred asylum of his only child. The countenance of Sir Thomas brightened when Grace looked in upon their conferences with the playfulness of a girl, though betraying, when she met the speaking glance of Randolph, the blush of woman.

Men of deep learning are not always men of the world, and so it proved with the doctor. He dreamed not of the natural consequences flowing from a friendly and daily intercourse between persons of similar taste and refinement. A being inferior to the English ambassador might

have proved a companion dangerous to the peace of Grace, for comparison was not at hand. In Sir Thomas were combined the outward and inward graces of a young and accomplished courtier. His elegance, refinement, varied acquirements, and high respect for her father, gave delight to the somewhat visionary child of nature, and the hero of her romantic thought was soon embodied in the person of the accomplished ambassador.

Happy were the hours passed in the house of the physician by Sir Thomas Randolph, during his protracted stay at Moscow.

The Czar had returned from the direful expedition to Novogorod, and still intimated no desire to give him audience, whilst numerous were the petty mortifications borne with steady resolution by the Englishman, inasmuch as he reserved for the Czar any demonstration of dignity becoming the representative of England's queen.

But from the venal crowd of satellites, courtiers, and spies, whose slavish minds reflected their master's wrath, the ambassador was more protected by his little friend Jocko than he was at all aware of.

Pug having been introduced in a former chapter, we make no apology for his biography, since his existence has become matter of history, and few of the annals of the eventful reign of Ivan the Terrible have omitted to notice his adventurous career. Certain is it, that Jocko for a long time inspired the inhabitants of Moscow with a degree of awe for the embassy, to which the dignity of his master was in no way accessory. The many unaccountable performances and tricks of Jocko, which nothing human could accomplish, tended to root in the minds of the Czar's subjects the belief that Jocko was an envoy from a suspicious personage, so that Sir Thomas sank, in their estimation, into the insignificance of a de-

pendent on the representative of his *dubious* majesty.

Howbeit, Sir Thomas and Master George Tuberville soon discerned that the intrusive officers of the despot quailed somewhat in the presence of the monkey, who daily gained in importance and estimation with the ambassador and his suite, while Sir Thomas now made him a constant companion, more especially as master Jocko had ingratiated himself with the beautiful daughter of the physician, to whom he was ever a welcome visitor.

Master Tuberville, meanwhile, devoted himself to a study of the customs of the country. The poet and the gentleman, his mind revolted at the atrocities of the day, and he was busied in the compilation of an account of

“That prodigious monster, Ivan Vassilivitch, Grand Duke and Czar of Muscovy.”

But, to the loss of posterity, this work was never published.

The secretary was a great favourite in the physician's coterie. In England, he had been the associate of the wits of his day, and he was ever prompt with various quotations from authors of celebrity, and amongst them, of one Shakspeare, then rising into notice. He was, moreover, fluent in Italian; and, to the edification of Grace Wilmington, was no mean translator of the tender versification of Petrarch, whilst those "stelle mortali," the theme of the Italian's song, were revealed in the eyes of the English girl, and materially assisted the poet's inspiration.

But if Grace smiled over the lucubrations of the poet, whilst her father, in more serious converse, secured for a while the ear of Sir Thomas, no sooner did the voice of the ambassador claim her attention, than the poet and the poet's song were entirely forgotten.

"Vain the thought!" exclaimed Master Walter; "the very germ of slavery is in a

Russian's breast. How shall we hope for the regeneration of a people, who blaspheme while they avow their bondage; and in their oaths, proclaim their Czar with their Maker. Alas! that despotism should outrage religion; that with the cradle of bondage they should learn such blind devotion to an anointed idol, and bow to his atrocities as if sanctioned by the Supreme Being."

"I think not so," observed Sir Thomas. "The instability of human affairs is an anchor for hope. Slavery may, like a deluge, rush over kingdoms with a conqueror's stride, but liberty still creeps; and though only matured by the growth of ages, its roots lie deep in the hearts of bond and free. The Muscovite may yet, in the revolution of years, boast of freedom, when the posterity of the present inheritors of rational liberty shall have again wound around themselves the galling chain of bondage, in-

duced by that ever restless and insatiable desire of man to throw off every restraint upon his will, and a propensity to undervalue the present and magnify the future.

“ Liberty shall yet smile through her tears, shall rise in glory from her very wreck. The destroyer himself has laid the corner-stone of her glorious temple. He, whose murdering hand his bleeding subjects kiss, and on whose head they invoke with dying breath the blessing of God. That structure of earthly salvation to the slave is the press which the despot has unwittingly established.”

“ Yes!” observed the physician, “ it was the only boon for which the slaves struggled with Ivan, themselves not aware of the vast importance of the blessing thus bestowed upon them.”

“ Then, may we not infer that even the exterminator, in his savage rule, has blindly and

unconsciously planted the germ of freedom, whilst under a less imperious sway, the benighted and prejudiced bondsmen might, in sheer apathy, have resisted the innovation, and the dawn of liberty might thus be more remote than ever for Muscovy. The press! bright sun of freedom! Hail! glorious beam of mercy to the oppressed. Thy voice shall reach the farthest confines of the earth. Thy power who shall stay?"

The physician mused a while, and Grace still watched the now silent lips of the speaker, as if she wished the discourse had admitted of longer speech.

Master George Tuberville, meanwhile, was scoring on the tips of his fingers the metre of a verse, which at length being formed, he gave utterance to with much seeming satisfaction.

“Ne'erless, a motley race are they,
Slave-born and nurtured to obey,

In whom all passion, sense, and law,
Bow to their despot's word and rod,
With something more than human awe,
As if he held the right from God,
To mar the birthright of the womb,
And souls unborn to bondage doom."

Night overtook them in their debate; and Jocko, who had been a watchful, if not a listening, companion, and had evinced his preference for the vicinage of Grace, was observed to be gesticulating, in close imitation of Master Tuberville, and adopting the young poet's manner from the first, was seen scoring the time and measure upon the tips of his fingers, with an approving nod, so faithfully given, that, as the secretary concluded, a hearty laugh interrupted his recitation, which, however, he immediately joined in, when he discovered the cause of the involuntary offence.

At this pass, the party were surprised by the announcement of some high dignitaries, with a

message from the Czar, and the Boyars Basmanoff and Viazemsky were introduced.

After the customary formalities, Sir Thomas Randolph was informed that his majesty required the Englishman's attendance, and alone, at the palace that night; that, moreover, his majesty ordered him to make his appearance unarmed, and also, in order to avoid notice, that he should proceed to the Kremlin, on foot.

Faint at heart, Grace Wilmington witnessed the departure of Sir Thomas for the palace of the unbridled despot. Whatever might have been the forebodings of the ambassador at the extraordinary and unprecedented command, he calmly deposited in the hands of his secretary his sword and dagger; he pressed somewhat longer than usual the passive hand of the physician's daughter. Then, with a manly step and graceful deportment, followed the Boyars out of the apartment.

Tuberville watched him depart, with feelings of anxiety and dread; whilst a pang still more acute was reserved for the honest breast of Walter Wilmington, as he caught his pale child in his arms, for now came the conviction, for the first time, that Sir Thomas Randolph had become too dear a guest for the peace of mind of his only daughter.

CHAPTER XIII.

“ Les Cossacques attaquaient les marchands et même les ambassadeurs Asiatiques qui se rendaient à Moscou ; ils alloient jusqu’à piller le trésor du tzar.”—KARAMSIN.

— “ a shriek and a yell
Like the devils of hell,
With pike and with axe,
In rushed the Cossacks.”

FRASER'S MAGAZINE, for Dec. 1839.

WHILST Sir Thomas Randolph wended his steps to the palace of the Czars, it will be necessary to return to the travellers, whom we left, in company with the Cossacque chief, at the road-side inn.

Within the isba were assembled a certain description of guests, whom our host wished, in his inmost soul, in the muddy bottom of the Moskwa. At a glance might be recognised the satellites of the Czar, the merciless Opritchnina, or legion of the elect. A detachment were

seated round the table, reposing from the direful labours of blood-shedding and plunder.

But, however unwelcome to mine host of the isba, he acknowledged, with the utmost obsequiousness, the honour of their patronage, as he promptly replenished their goblets with the pure, and, as he lustily swore, the unadulterated vodki.

Night was approaching, and the soldiery were still regaling themselves, when the host of the isba was summoned to wait on a party of travellers, who were alighting at the door, and whose entrance was announced by several boors, who appeared to act in the capacity of escort. A portly man, about the middle age of life, entered, supporting a young girl, who was muffled in a costly shoub, or cloak, lined with the black wolf skin; who, trembling with cold, approached that part of the isba nearest to the stove, but without unveiling her face. Her companion having paid the usual compliment

to the company, and secured a seat for the lady, turned to his attendants, and gave directions to bring forward refreshment.

During this time the Cossacque, who had entered after the new guests, had stationed himself in the rear of the Czar's legion, and being, apparently, one of the party just arrived, was immediately questioned as to the rank and importance of the new-comers.

But the Cossacque was not communicative, and the querist soon ascertained from the boors that the traveller was a merchant, from Nijni-Novogorod, on his way to present his daughter at the general muster for the Czar's inspection.

"Merchant!" echoed the inquirer; "truly, these shopkeepers give themselves great airs," he added, audibly enough to be heard by the travellers.

It was not, however, for the merchant to feel for a moment any surprise at the contempt

which was affixed to his calling, in an age when Europe, in general, engrossed by war and conquest, despised the sons of commerce; and this feeling existed more than elsewhere in his native country. But there was something ominous in the effrontery of the revellers; and it was with some anxiety that he cast a glance at the licentious soldiery, and the formidable array of carbines which were stacked near the stove. He unconsciously pressed the hand of his child, which responded with tremor, as if she comprehended his uneasiness; but assuming a cheerful countenance, he seized the first moment of suppression of mirth, to express himself the humble servant of the guests, and taking from his servant's hand a tankard of wine, he pledged them round.

The Cossacque had seated himself near the soldiers, and appeared willing to join in their hilarity and good cheer.

The merchant, who now hoped to effect his

escape, quietly placed the lady's arm within his own, and was silently retreating, when he who appeared to have command over the troop threw himself back, and leaning from his seat, intercepted their path betwixt him and the wall.

“Not so fast, brother! Prithee, art thou so unmannerly as not to drink to the Czar? For in these troublesome times, every man should pledge himself to his majesty on fitting occasion, lest his loyalty should be called in question. Bumpers round, brother, and let it be of the same immaculate beverage as the last.”

The merchant made a sign for bringing more wine, and the cups were filled to the brim.

“Long life to the Czar!”

“Another—Confusion to his enemies!”

“Again—Death to all traitors
Death to the bandit Cossacques, Yermak and Koltzo.”

“Ha! ha! ha!” shouted the Cossacque, as

he held the cup to his lips. The convulsive movement dashed out the contents, which drenched the matchlocks of the carbines behind him.

The attention of the owners of them, at that instant, was too much engrossed by their noisy mirth, to observe the injury done to their fire-arms. One of the Opritchnina suddenly recollected the female, who, muffled to her eyes in the shoub, had slunk behind the merchant, to escape observation.

“By my troth, comrades, in our zeal and loyalty, we forget our gallantry to the lady.”

“Trot her out, by all means,” said a military dandy, of the sixteenth century; and with the word, he sprang from his seat, and seizing the lady’s arm, drew her towards the table.

“Your pardon, noble dignitaries; suffer me to entreat your forbearance. The lady is much indisposed, from the fatigues of her long journey,” anxiously observed the merchant.

“Here is physic for the dying,” rejoined the satellite; “let her drink a bumper to the Czar.”

“Hoïda!” was the loud chorus to the proposal.

It was vain to appeal. From the folds of the dark fur, a small, delicate hand was extended to take the cup.

The attention of the company was attracted by its beauty and whiteness, as it was tremblingly held forth. The lady raised the cup to her lip, when, noiselessly stealing from behind, the Cossacque suddenly stood before her, seized the cup, and, with the dexterity of a conjuror, jerked the contents, unperceived, as before, on the matchlocks of the carbines, and stamping his foot, insisted on the lady emptying the cup. She was only conscious of the deception, from its lightness. With the instinctive quick perception of her sex, she pressed it to her lips,

and, with seeming effort, pretended to swallow the wine.

“ Hoïda !” resounded through the clamorous and besotted soldiery, when the empty cup was triumphantly placed on the table.

“ By St. Serge ! methinks I will turn merchant myself, for the good things of this world seem to be thy portion, brother of the booths. Good wine and lovely women ! for much do I opine that unto that tiny white hand belongs a pretty face. Off with that invidious cloak,” shouted the leader.

The trembling girl, without more ceremony, was immediately relieved of the outer garment, when, to the wondering and delighted gaze of all, a young creature of exquisite beauty stood blushing before them ; her cheek betraying a still deeper suffusion, as she felt conscious of the rude gaze of the soldiery, whilst in their eyes that modest consciousness con-

siderably heightened their estimation of her charms.

Too much engrossed with the object of their admiration, the Opritchnina had not observed the absence of one of the guests of the isba.

The Cossacque, when he dismounted at the door of the inn, had not confined his horse, but left him, as was his wont, at perfect liberty. It is well known to all who are acquainted with the manners of the Cossacque and Tartar tribes, that the uses to which these animals are applied by these adventurers are manifold. Does the Cossacque require a pillow? He rests his head upon his loins. A companion? He addresses to him his remarks on matters of importance to them both, and when at home makes him the playfellow of his children. With so many marks of his consciousness of the discernment of his steed, it is not to be wondered that the Cossacque's horse, from sheer gratitude, exceeds his fellow-brutes; and instances are

on record of their wonderful sagacity in moments of trial. Such was the animal whose master had lately entered the isba; and when sounds of quarrelsome portent reached him, with ears erect and dilated nostrils, he turned his head towards the very road on which he had but now borne his rider, and galloped on until he met the troop he was in the habit of heading.

All the snorting and neighing in their most expressive notes, would not have conveyed his meaning more effectually than the circumstance of his master not being upon his back; and it was with admirable alacrity that he pranced in the van, as the whole squadron now quickened their pace, with much apprehension for their hetman's safety.

The merchant, who could barely suppress his indignation, yet who, on noting the formidable numbers of the Czar's myrmidons, felt how inadequate were those of his own attendants to

contend with them, seemed still to cheer, with apparent confidence, his child. But the timid maiden, who for a moment had felt returning hope and protection, when an unknown hand had saved her from the imposed libation, had thrown a searching glance around, but in vain. The stranger, the Cossacque, was gone.

“ Merchant!” cried the chief, “ the lady will need our escort in the morning. Far be it from the gallant character of the Opritchnina, that thou or the lady should be suffered to proceed on such a night, and alone. Rest thee with us, and our friend Slopsky; it shall be our care to make the lady happy. Prithee, sweet one, seat thee here, I, thy knight, will protect thee. This arm”— and as he spoke, the lawless ruffian passed it around the trembling girl to bring her to his seat, when the door of the isba was thrown open, and in a moment the room was crowded with new visitors, of a very different appear-

ance. The Opritchnina sprung to their feet, and rushed to seize their carbines, whilst, at the same moment, the merchant's daughter was rescued from their chief's embrace, and he himself reeled back, from the violence with which his prey was wrested from him. Some of the soldiers succeeded in grasping their carbines, one of which was instantly levelled at the protector of the merchant's daughter; but the matchlock, like its master, had imbibed too much of the Medonia, and responded not to his call.

The young girl, ere she had looked in the face of him whose protecting arm supported her, felt assured it was the friend who had first come to her relief, and she clung confidingly to him, as he gave directions to his followers to pinion the troopers, who now, with curses and imprecations, were compelled to submit to this disgraceful coercion, for whichever way they turned,

pistols, poniards, and lances, were pointed towards them.

“The Lord have mercy on me!” ejaculated the landlord; “who shall save me? The Czar’s elect thus treated in my house! Dire vengeance will fall upon me.”

“Meanwhile,” calmly observed the commander of the strange troop, “attend implicitly to my orders, or I swear thou shalt not live to receive from his majesty the chastisement which thou darest. Lead quickly to the cellar, and do the bidding of my comrades,” he added, as he instructed one of them to see these miscreants safely lodged in the vault, and to leave a guard, with orders to spear the first of these ruffians who should dare to raise his voice.

The firm tone with which these words were pronounced, the dispatch with which his attendants proceeded to obey, did much to quell and silence the imprecations which assailed them

from the subdued soldiers; and the party was forthwith marshalled off to their cool quarters below, to digest at leisure their Medonia and discomfiture.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ He that takes up the Russian faith, be he Lutheran or Papist, must first renounce his former baptism, curse his father and mother, and spit thrice over his shoulder.”—PRESENT STATE OF RUSSIA, 1671.

“ He commanded the (Krim Tartar’s) ambassador’s sheepe skinne coate and cap to be taken off, and a golden robe and rich cap to be put on, who laughed aloud thereat

“ They would have taken off his golden gowne and cap, but he and his company strove with them, and would not permit it. The emperor fell into an agony, tore his hair and beard,” &c. —SIR JEROME HORSEY’S OBSERVATIONS. See PURCHASE, HIS PILGRIMAGE.

THE dashing legionists who were thus summarily placed in durance vile, were a selected body from that genuine stock, the Opritchnina. Their troop consisted chiefly of such of those elect cut-throats as owed their preferment to the court favour of the younger Basmanoff,

and were consequently as secretly devoted to the minion, as they were avowedly subservient to their common master. It was thus that, in the name of his majesty, much was committed that never reached his ear; and a species of guerilla warfare and plunder was carried on, in the way of private speculation, to the ruin of individuals, without adding to the treasures of the Czar.

The Boyar's son, Theodore Basmanoff, was the leader in person of the audacious troop, which had undergone the indignity imposed upon them by the Cossacques, with the exception of one of their number, who effected his escape, and was now hastening to the palace of his sovereign, well aware that the insult to his devoted legion would bring down upon the offenders a vengeance that would sate even the hate of the Opritchnina. Nor was he unprepared to name the audacious chieftain of the Cossacques, for he alone had recognised those features, and remembered that the owner's head

was already doomed for former depredations, and that Moscow had once trembled at the daring attacks of this redoubtable freebooter from the Wolga. The moment was favourable, for little was wanting to rouse the vengeance of the Czar.

In the Kremlin there was a silence of portentous meaning, for the throned tyrant now awaited the arrival of one already introduced to the reader.

To account for the extraordinary summons of the English ambassador to the Kremlin in such an unusual manner, it will be necessary to trace the operation of the events of the day upon the mind of the autocrat.

The once brave monarch, the conqueror of Kazan, was now the pusillanimous slave of his own disgraceful passions. He who had given proofs in his youth of distinguished bravery, who had released his country from the Tartar yoke, was now but a braggart of power. On

the invasion of the Crimean horde that but lately laid waste his country with fire and sword, he was the first to fly from danger. The peril passed, he had returned to Moscow to complete the work of desolation. Now the Tartar threatened again; and the monarch, in the midst of the nuptial preparations, was visited by the barbarian's envoy.

In the *doumna*, the council-chamber, Ivan received the *murza*. The irreverent barbarian, with his suite, marched into the presence, clad in sheep-skin, with caps of the same, and wearing their bows and arrows, and scimitars. In vain the Czar displayed before them the three crowns of his empire; his princes and nobles attending, richly adorned with pearls and jewels. The *murza* and his suite stood unbonnetted.

“My master!” shouted the envoy with an insolent tone, looking fierce and grimly; “my master, the great emperor of all the kingdoms and chans that the sun doth spread his beams

“ over, hath sent to thee, Ivan Vassilivitch, his
“ vassal, to know how thou didst like the scourge
“ of his displeasure by sword, fire, and famine ;
“ and withal has sent thee for remedy, a present
“ of his indignation (pulling out a foul rusty
“ knife), to cut thy throat withal.”

With this the murza hastened out of the room, without answer. The emperor fell into an agony, and tore his hair and beard.

Thus humbled, bearded on his throne, the poltroon visited the wrath of his shame upon his defenceless subjects ; curbing his pride before the dreaded Tartar. The humiliation he underwent from the powerful, he revenged upon the unprotected ; and now he called to mind the stubborn independence of the Englishman, and Sir Thomas Randolph was ordered to the palace, as we have observed, unarmed, and alone.

The proud yet courteous Briton, he well conceived, possessed the independence of spirit which belongs to civilization. He, moreover,

was aware that the sword which he carried, was then the indispensable appanage of the costume of a gentleman, and that the laws of the West allowed even redress from royalty for insulted honour. The irritated Czar was desirous that the interview might enable him to humble before his court even the representative of England's queen. The precaution of bidding him appear defenceless, was worthy the tyrant and the poltroon.

The doumna chamber of the Kremlin was occupied by the monarch and his courtiers, when the English ambassâdor appeared on the threshold. At a signal given by the Czar, the Boyars and councillors retired, ten only remaining at a distance from the sovereign.

Ivan beckoned to the Englishman to approach, and within hearing of the interpreter alone began the conference.

“He seeks my alliance with England's queen?” said the Czar, as he dictated his

words to the interpreter. "But either she must engage the Poles to come to definite terms of peace with Muscovy, by requiring them to restore Livonia and the territory of Polotsk, or in concert with me, declare war against mine enemy."

"My royal mistress would consider me a madman, if I complied with such a demand," was the undaunted reply.

The Czar surveyed the ambassador from head to foot, but still restrained his wrath.

"I have heard, too," continued, with a sardonic smile, the autocrat, "that the envoy's countrymen have secret relations with the Swede and the Dane, enemies of Russia, to whom they render important services. I am informed also, that not content with these nefarious transactions, they write to England defaming Russia and ourself by false and injurious descriptions, styling us ignorant bar-

barians. The Czar can only forgive such grave offence, in consideration of his respect for England's queen, feeling assured that it could not have entered into the thoughts of that princess to dictate to Russia's Czar, who never bowed to emperor, sultan, or king !”

“The Dane's unjust pretensions,” calmly replied the Englishman, “were silenced at the representations of my royal mistress, and our merchantmen have free access to the shores of Russian Lapland. This proves no collusion with the enemies of Russia.”

But the circumlocutions by which Ivan sought to bring about an explanation which more concerned his vanity than his country's interests, were now dropped, and in a commanding tone he thus expressed himself—

“With what intentions has the envoy come? Is it to note to me the refusal of the hand of Mary Hastings? Perhaps,” he continued with

a sneer, "to open fresh negotiations, and to propose some other wayward English hussy? 'Twere now too late; for let the Englisher know, the Czar confers the honour of his hand upon a Russian subject."

"Englishmen are free-born," answered the envoy; "and their queen's bright rule is for their happiness alone: she doth not seek to sway the free impulse of the heart of even the meanest of her subjects. Mary Hastings, daughter of the noble Huntingdon, and niece of England's queen, was, at the Czar's entreaty, solicited by her majesty to wed Russia's sovereign, when with such solicitude as became the mother of her people, did she represent to my exalted countrywoman, that the price of the Czarina's crown was apostacy, and the dread rite of Greek conversion, to spit upon the religion of her forefathers, which from childhood she had been taught to revere.

“ Moreover, when upon such inquiry as concerned the lady’s future welfare, she was informed that Ivan, Emperor of Muscovy, had a living consort, the mother of a new-born Czarevitch, the niece of my royal mistress declined the proffered hand of Russia’s emperor”——

“ Of what stuff are these proud islanders made, that they should rate as nothing a monarch’s will? Have I not divorced? Where is the glory of my sceptre, if it cannot break asunder an irksome bondage? Ask this forward messenger, which of the wives of his mistress’s father was her mother. Henry had six—Ivan would be more than he—and takes a seventh. We will no more of these negotiations.

“ Away!” exclaimed the Czar, now boiling with indignation, his iron staff shaking in his grasp; “ away, ignorant and demented envoy! We seek not for Elizabeth to arbitrate ’twixt

us and the Polander: All we required was an alliance, which honour we, Oto-Czar of Muscovy, would confer on England withal."

The courtiers at this period of the conference drew nearer to the disputants, as the staff of the monarch was lifted with a menacing air, and the Boyars were seen to unsheath their knives.

The imperturbable Englishman threw a glance of contempt upon the ministers of the sovereign, fixed the Czar with a look, triumphant in patriotic spirit and duty, which revealed to the autocrat the undaunted mind of a free-born British subject. Fascinated and subdued, the tyrant shrank before the high and noble bearing of the chivalrous knight; the iron club which he had never before lifted with a vain threat, fell harmless to the ground.

"There lives not," spoke the ambassador, "a sovereign more illustrious than my glorious

queen. Elizabeth of England yields to none; not even to Ivan of Russia.”

The memorable words rang in the despot's ear long after. Choked with indignation, he now waved his hand to bid the dauntless envoy quit his presence; and the ambassador, unarmed and alone, retraced his steps to his hotel, sad at heart, but comforted with the justice of his cause, and the performance of his duty, without sacrifice of the dignity of his royal mistress.

Whilom the mighty Ivan, in the pride of manly beauty and majesty, radiant in the light of a self-approving conscience, had looked upon a race devoted to him with benignity and grace. How changed now the times and the man! From their sunken sockets, the little grey eye cast a suspicious look around; and where the dark tresses once flowed luxuriantly, some scanty grey hairs shaded his temples, and a few straggled on his chin. Time had dealt

as ruthlessly with the Czar, as he with his subjects; and crime had added the weight of years to the person of the monarch. But even yet his lofty stature was imposing, and his cruelties aided the imagination to dress him in more than mortal shape. The king of terrors never awoke more dread in the breast of a sinner.

A dark ferocity settled on the features of the Czar, as the Englishman left the presence. The courtiers trembled; for well they knew the humiliations he underwent were repaid upon his subjects, as if in proportion to the contempt exhibited for him, the life's blood of his slaves should flow and wash out the stain.

But at that moment his favourite and privileged buffoon, Gvozdof, entered, and unconscious of the recent cause of the irritation of Ivan, was the ill-timed bearer of unpleasant news.

“ Now, sirrah, we are not in the vein for jest,” observed Ivan, angrily.

“ Nor we, Ivan Vassilivitch,” retorted somewhat boldly the buffoon. “ Our body-guard, of which we are especial and valiant commander, the Opritchnina, have been outraged, nay, confined in durance vile. One who escaped the insult has posted here for succour.”

“ Hah !” aspirated the monarch with evident emotion, and seizing his iron baton—“ This concerns us, indeed !——

“ Now by the sceptre of our Czardom, on kith and kin—were they our blood—shall fall the vengeance of our wrath. Out with thy story.”

“ The Boyar’s son, Basmanoff, with a small escort of the Opritchnina, having had notice that the banditti were waylaying travellers on the road, by which the far-famed beauty, Marfa Sabakin, was expected to arrive this night, did,

in his zeal for your majesty, make gallant preparation for her safety, by volunteering the protection of his troop on her road; when seeking refreshment at an isba on the highway, they were surrounded unawares, by a large force of the marauding Cossacques, headed by the notorious Koltzo, and ignominiously incarcerated in the cellar of the inn!"

"Spiced hydromel!" articulated with difficulty the Czar, choking with wrath. A goblet of the fiery and fatal liquor was brought.

"Now would I not be a Cossacque for all the plunder of the Tartar Khan!" observed very loyally, though inopportunately, Gvozdoff the buffoon. It recalled the humiliation he had so recently undergone, and the wrath which had been kindled that day by the bullying envoy of the barbarian, was in a moment transferred to the unlucky minion.

"Thou art merry, Gvozdoff!" said the Czar,

as he poured the scalding contents of his cup over the buffoon's head.

The sufferer uttered a shriek, and made an effort to escape; but the murderer was too quick for him, and his dagger was plunged to the hilt in the neck of the buffoon.

“Call the leech!” exclaimed the monarch, with symptoms of remorse at the hasty deed.

“I have carried the joke too far,” said he to one of the physicians in attendance. “We would have thee save the life of our good servant.”

“Too far, indeed,” remarked the obsequious physician; “for Heaven and your majesty alone,” added he, in the usual courtly phrase, “can restore him to life. He is no longer of the living.”

“Remove then the dog's carcass,” said the Czar, as he spurned with his foot the ill-fated buffoon, and ordering Maluta Skuratoff to

muster a strong detachment of the Opritchnina for the rescue of their incarcerated comrades, he proceeded to the apartment where the wine and the feast was prepared, remembering no longer the victim of his uncontrolled fury.

CHAPTER XV.

“ O su gli estivi ardori
Placida al sol riposa
O sta fra l'erbe, e i fiori
La pigra serpe ascosa,
Se non la preme il piede
Di ninfa, o di pastor.
Ma se calcar si sente,
A vendicarsi aspira ;
E su l'acuto dente
Il suo veleno, e l'ira
Tutta raccoglie allor.”

WHEN the Boyarinia Basmanoff had witnessed the departure of Theodore, upon an expedition of so much importance to the success of her daughter, as the frustration of the chances of a dreaded rival, her active mind reverted to the dangers which surrounded her, in the pretensions of those ladies who were still retained, as com-

petitors with her child, for the crown of the Czarina. The Czar, it was evident, would have passed unnoticed the beauty of her house, but for the opportune remark of the interested Jew, Bomelius; nor would she have been honoured with the Czar's command for a second interview, as one of the *élite*, had not his unrestrained jokes on the effect of her elaborate but ill-chosen toilette, brought her forth from the crowd of beauties, and thus made her an object of more particular attention. The circumstance had recalled her to herself, and she no longer made sure of the game, though she was prepared to put into operation every artifice her ambitious mind could devise for its success. Her high birth, and her husband's favour at court, had secured for her the appointment of first lady of the bedchamber to the bride elect; and she revolved in her mind those means and opportunities which the office near her person

would afford, if the choice of the Czar should fall on a stranger.

She remembered that, in a similar important trust, the elected bride of one of the Czar's predecessors had fainted under the preparatory nuptial ceremony of the Greek church, of combing the hair before the vow was pronounced, from it having been drawn purposely so tight, that she sank under the operation; and the ruse had not been discovered, till she who had bribed the hair-dresser had successfully supplanted her victim.

The Boyarinia was not troubled with compunctious feelings; the sacrifice of human life formed no obstacle to the accomplishment of her project, provided the means were so far plausible as to escape detection. The prospect of wealth and power lured her on; and the commerce producing lucrative results, she formed a partnership in guilt with Bomelius, who had

discovered to her villanous expedients with which she had grown familiar in idea, if not in practice.

Night was coming on apace, as, buried in thought, she traced her imaginary course to the summit of affluence, unconscious of a step approaching her, till the form of a man presented itself close to her side. She started not at the stranger, lest her own passing thoughts should be legible in her countenance.

The individual who stood before her, and who had gained access to her unannounced, wore the high Greek cap of a church dignitary, and his long beard and flowing hair fell around his breast and shoulders. His stature was tall and majestic, almost superhuman to her eye, as her excited imagination measured him in the coming gloom, for twilight was now disappearing in the shades of night.

It was not her confessor, for enough of the outline of his person was discernible to mark

the contrast, and to perceive from his habiliments that he was a servant of the church. Whilst making that survey she underwent various emotions, and her strong mind sank under the weight of its self-accusing thoughts.

“Peace be with thee, daughter. ’Tis my duty, and thy weal, brings me hither. I crave your attention.”

The Boyarinia made no reply. If the sudden appearance of the priest subdued her presence of mind, not less did the solemnity of his voice strike awe into her breast. She sat speechless, but with rivetted attention to his words.

The holy man paused for permission to proceed. He then resumed.

“I come not to dictate to thee, but to implore thee, Gregoriovna Basmanoff, to listen to my words ere it be too late for thee to retrace thy steps. The Czar, in defiance of our holy church, repudiates his wife: and to render the crime.

still more offensive to Heaven, has summoned to his palace the honest daughters of his subjects, to select from their number his seventh bride.

“ I know that thou wouldst say the Czar of Russia assumes to be the vicegerent of his God, compels the church to sanction his enormities, and moulds the divine law to countenance crime. Let not my speech offend thee, lady. I am an anointed priest, and to the King of kings alone am I accountable for my words and actions.

“ I reproach thee not for thy subserviency to the monarch’s will ; thou art his slave, and must obey. But, beware thou attempt not to advance thy blind ambitious views, by imposing upon thy sovereign the spurious offspring whom thou dost proclaim thine own child, and who now waits the election of the Czar.”

Owing to the obscurity of the apartment, the priest could not perceive the workings of the

features of the Boyarina. She had arisen from the couch, and he could only discern the outline of her person, as it assumed a haughty menacing attitude.

“Beware!” he added, “lest the choice of the monarch should fall upon the girl Katinka, miscalled Basmanoff; for I warn thee, that should the nuptials be performed, it is on record against thee that thou didst surreptitiously obtain the stranger’s in lieu of thine own diseased offspring. Lady, the secret is in my keeping;—renounce her, and yield her to her lawful parent, and for ever shall the deception about to be practised on the sovereign be buried in oblivion. Shouldst thou be disposed to confess the fraud, and restore to the true mother of the child the privilege of seeing and acknowledging her daughter, not only will she forgive thee the past, but be secret for the future; and I myself will stand between thee and danger. The honesty of thy prompt confession will pre-

pare the way for my good offices in thy behalf, which shall in no wise disappoint thy need."

If a sense of alarm came over the Boyarinia when the priest opened the subject of his message, if a guilty conscience, for a moment, shook her resolution, and stayed her purpose, the ghostly counsellor had no sooner touched upon the cherished object of her ambition, and named the probable chance of Katinka's being the preferred candidate for the Czarina's crown, than all her high-wrought expectations came with renewed force to her aid, and remorse and conscience existed no more.

"Audacious priest!" exclaimed the Boyarinia, when words first came to her assistance, "thy name, thy rank, I know not; but thou shalt not leave my house till they are known to me. Villain! not alone content with traducing thy sovereign, thou wouldst persuade me to disown my child. Thinkst thou, I do not

fathom the depths of thy infamous plot? Thou hast heard that the daughter of the noble Basmanoff is graciously looked upon by the Czar, and that the crown even now hangs over her head, and waits but the signal to be placed on the brow of thy lawful Czarina. This consummation of a mother's pride, of a daughter's glory, wouldst thou destroy, to substitute a rival's advancement, for purposes of aggrandizement to thy self and thy base partisans. Tremble, hypocrite! for even now will I unmask thee; nor shall the sun set again, 'til thy knavish form is dragged from before the sanctuary of the Ikonostas, which thou hast desecrated too long. Nor shall my vengeance be sated, 'til the confederates of this infernal scheme are brought to expiate upon the rack, the crime that would have bereaved a mother of her beloved and lawful child! Ho! there!" continued the Boyarinia, who had worked her-

self into a frenzy of wrath. "Ho! there!" shouted the infuriated matron, as she drowned the speech of the priest, and the serfs of her household now rushed to the apartment, bearing torches, which threw a sudden light around.

"Seize the villain!" thundered their mistress, 'ere she had time to observe the features of the priest; but a glance, as she uttered the words, filled her with dismay, for she instantly recognised the metropolitan—the head of the Russian church; the venerable and holy prelate, Philip.

But the slaves, creatures, whose breath of life—the gift of their common Maker—depended on her mercy; whose inheritance of the free gifts of Heaven had been transferred, even at their birth, to the power of a fellow-creature, obeyed not the order. The being who stood before them was the cherished pastor of their souls, and with the

intuitive sense that their immortal part was above the reach of man, they identified with their only property the venerable prelate, who pointed out to them an hereafter; and one and all, as they blindly rushed to obey the dictates of their worldly mistress, prostrated themselves at the feet of Philip, to implore the blessing of him, who interceded for them with their Spiritual Lord.

This submission to him, in defiance of her commands, roused the Boyarinia. To her remembrance, at once, came the information of the prelate's disgrace with the Czar; and from the secret intelligence she had received from the court, she knew him to be marked for destruction at a convenient day. A smile came over her countenance as she inwardly resolved, that day should not be far distant, if her powers of intrigue could hasten its arrival.

With a firm and menacing look she met the

dignified, but saddened, glance of the prelate, as he slowly made his egress, bestowing a fervent blessing upon the humble flock around him.

“So!” ejaculated the lady, “’tis abroad then—Katinka, it is bruited already, is to be the bride elect. Now would they brave my power to repossess her; now, the prospect of a crown awaits her, they threaten!—the dogs that bark, they say——. No matter! my fangs are as sharp as theirs—meddling priest, thou shalt know more of me anon.”

There was one of that menial crew who witnessed the abortive visit of the churchman with scarce controllable feelings of anguish. It was Youry, the disguised slave, who had instigated the prelate to work upon the conscience of the Boyarina, to awaken, if possible, remorse for the unjust appropriation of her child. And as the hireling saw him depart brow-beaten and

reviled, the last hope for the recovery of Katinka was gone, whilst openly to have laid claim to her, would have brought down ruin upon herself, and eternal exile from the house of the powerful Basmanoff.

CHAPTER XVI.

“ Je ne veux plus être voituré par des bœufs : remplacez les par vos femmes et vos filles.

“ On les attacha deux par deux à la voiture du farouche Obrin.

“ Il monta sur son chariot, s’arma d’un fouet, et toucha avec une joie barbare sur les épaules nues des six infortunées.”

—*Vide* HIST. DE LA RUSSIE, REDUITE AUX SEULS FAITS IMPORTANS.

“ A printing-house was set up with the approbation of one of the former Czars ; but not long after the house was fired in the night-time.”—PERRY’S STATE OF RUSSIA.

“ An envoy, happening to be at Moscow at the time of an eclipse of the sun, and his secretary, who was a mathematician, having calculated that it would be in a digit or two of being total, there was a report spread through all the city of the day and hour it was to appear.”—*IDEM*.

WE crave the reader’s indulgence for that exposition of scenes of crime, which a regard for historical truth compels us to describe—scenes over which an elegant historian of his

country, as far as he might, drew the curtain of oblivion, glad to escape from the avowal of enormities, at once shocking to humanity, and disgraceful to the age and country wherein they were enacted. In our abhorrence, we are ready to exclaim, "Can such things be?" Thank Heaven! those days of mental darkness, and blind prostration of the dignity of man, have, like the shades of night before the morning's dawn, fled from the rays of the sun of Civilization. So far from those acts of despotism which we have dwelt upon, being conformable to the taste and opinion of the natives of the present time, we may say, in the words of a respectable modern writer, "There lives not a Russian who would not gladly blot out from the page of history the annals of the atrocities of that age."

Who will deny the assertion, that, under the sway of a wise and beneficent monarch, Russia, so long obscured by ignorance, and weighed

down by oppression, would have retained her rank amongst European nations, and in the glorious march towards the goal of science, commerce, and freedom, would have progressed side by side with them ?

Even in that benighted age, commerce found her enterprising sons, and the illustrious Stroganoffs, despite the withering and unpropitious reign of Ivan (whose ancestor they once ransomed from captivity), surpassed in enterprise, and equalled in wealth, the Medici.

Yet did the prostrate land, "almost ashamed to know itself," put forth buds of civilization, but the nipping frosts of despotism destroyed the opening flower ; and the drag-chain of tyranny, fastened to the car of liberty, left Russia far behind.

The splendour which greeted Ivan when he ascended the throne, the wealth that poured into his coffers from conquered nations, the blind submission of a people attached to their

Czars, eager to seize upon, and capable of improving, the advantages of refinement, were excellent ingredients wherewith to form, in skilful hands, a mighty nation. But the fell destroyer trampled upon the gift of Providence, and spurned from him, as a thing unworthy his royal acceptance, the well-earned affection and gratitude of his subjects. Thus were all those advantages lost to him; the hoarded treasures of the Kremlin were piled up in the darkness of its caves; the plundered wealth of his industrious subjects was stored in the vast recesses of the titled robber's den; and the richest monarch of Christendom reigned over a land impoverished by his avarice. The vast caverns, filled with gold, amassed only to feast his eyes, served to enrich a succession of usurpers, as grasping as himself; and Russia, for years after his death, groaned under the sway of tyrants disciplined by despots.

The depraved and iron sway of the Moguls

had grafted their vices on the Russian character, naturalised them, for ages to come, submissively to bend to an ignominious yoke. Muscovy had witnessed her matrons and virgins harnessed to the car of their barbarous conquerors, urged to speed by the lash, like the cattle for which they were substituted.

But the chain of the bondsman may be over-strained, and the links be broken. Goaded by such excess of misery, by despair and degradation, they preferred the despotism of a native ruler to that of the merciless and scornful foreigner.

The lesson of superstition which had been so long instilled into them by an ignorant and servile priesthood, taught them to look up to their native prince as a divinity almost equal to their Creator, and in the arduous struggle for freedom from the galling yoke of the stranger, they saw not the effects of their own bravery, but the power, the might, and the wisdom of

their idolised, and heretofore tributary, sovereign. Thus their allegiance became the more rooted, and altogether immovable, under the cruelties inflicted upon them by their native ruler; "for," said they, "are not our bodies to the Czar, and our souls to God?" Nor need we be surprised at this feeling, when a Russian impaled by the unjust order of Ivan, after twenty-four hours of prolonged torture, should exclaim to his wife and children, who attended his last moments, "Great God! protect the Czar!"

Ivan well knew the power vested in him, but knew not the inscrutable ways of Him who chastiseth mortals with the rod which they themselves have made; and who, for purposes unseen, sends alike "the thunder-bolt, the plague, the earthquake, and the tyrant."

Nor deemed he, whilst surrounded by power, wealth, and magnificence, that, though the evil

is permitted, woe is denounced against him
“by whom the evil cometh.”

Yet were there some found to shed tears to
his memory, like that Cæsar, on whose bier an
unknown hand had strewn sweet flowers.

Ivan, although ambitious of posthumous
fame, saw not, in his pursuit of arbitrary power,
the final results of that countenance which at
this time he gave to the establishment of the
press in his dominions; and it is somewhat
strange, that the Holy Bible should have made
its first appearance in the Russian language,
elegantly printed under his immediate direction
and auspices.

The press, that engine of destruction to
despotism, then in its infancy, had not been
fully appreciated. Its mighty powers had not
been developed. Ivan dreamt not that his new
bauble would be like a two-edged sword in the
hands of a giant, and that at a future day, one
of that race who had indignantly burnt it to

the ground as a profane innovation, would by its means portray to his countrymen that very monster-Czar, and that an enlightened autocrat would live to countenance the historian.

Fast as the sword of the murderer thinned the ranks of patriots, bringing down even the most exalted to the same level of abject slavery, some there were, a few remaining Princes and Boyars, of the stamp of heroes, who had fought the battles of their country, who lived to revive her energies, and raise her to a dignified elevation among Christian states—names that were to be handed down to posterity with those of the brave, the virtuous, and the wise.

The magnanimous and holy Sylvestre, the hermit of Novogorod; Adaschef, the mild and prudent adviser of Ivan in his days of virtue, were indeed no more; even their race was extirpated, lest their names should be a future reproach to the memory of their destroyer.

The intrepid Scheremetieff—the brave Vorotynsky—the valiant Shouisky, conquerors of Kazan, all shed their blood on the scaffold.

But Russia yet looked up to the remnant of her brave Princes and Boyars, and such as the Mstislavskys, the Boutourlins, the Woronzoffs, nobly responded to the call of their country.

Roused by a just indignation, which they were scarcely able to control, they proceeded with caution. The indignities which their country suffered under the sway of a pusillanimous tyrant, were the source of deep mortification and humiliation, which, as subjects, they felt for the truckling servility of their sovereign.

Thus the interview of Ivan with the armed Tartar envoy, memorable for the *forbearance* of their Czar, when bullied by the barbarian, was in excellent keeping with his cautious proceeding, in receiving the *unarmed* envoy of a civilized nation, a prudence highly com-

mendable in our hero; yet did the cheeks of the nobles present burn with patriotic shame.

When the monarch entered the banquetting hall, he appeared to have forgotten all that related to his own degrading conduct, and intent only upon the insult offered to his cherished legion of the Opritchnina, direful was the vengeance he contemplated on the daring outlaws who had provoked his wrath.

The banquet proceeded in comparative silence, for which his countenance was the tacit command. No song, no toast enlivened the feast—few dared to speak, until Bomelius, the Dutch physician, facetiously called the monarch's attention to a rumour which related to the English embassy.

“Has my liege heard of the outlandish animal introduced by the English envoy? The first of its species ever beheld in Muscovy.”

“Dost allude to himself?” interrupted Ivan,

“for, of a verity, he hath not been bred in courts, or he would not have answered Muscovy’s Czar with such daring effrontery.”

“In truth, your majesty is most lenient with these pert islanders,” continued the Dutch Jew, who leaned to his adopted country, then the intriguing rival of England. “But I would speak of the monkey, so called, which has acquired some notoriety during the short residence of Sir Thomas Randolph. This animal is most hideous, and your loyal people are fully persuaded that the brute is possessed of supernatural powers, and is the representative of his majesty of the regions of darkness.”

“Upon what basis do they establish such a presumption?” inquired the Czar, with increasing curiosity.

“Not upon the *basis*, but the *tail* of the creature, your majesty. The fact is, the nondescript, although in semblance it doth assimilate most closely to the human form, hath a

very questionable appendage—a—tail,—your majesty,” further ventured the Jew.

“Then, of a truth do we opine, with our loyal subjects, that the animal hath the very appurtenances which our holy church ascribes to the evil one.”

“And moreover, your majesty,” continued Bomelius, “your lieges affirm that the whole of the embassy are in demoniacal allegiance; and your trusty physician, Wilmington (he insidiously added), has apparently joined in the Satanic conspiracy, for the greatest intimacy exists between him and the ambassador.”

The Czar looked suspiciously at the Dutchman, as if he was fully conscious of the invidious insinuation.

“There is, moreover,” added Bomelius, “a stripling whom your majesty may have noticed in the suite of the Englisher; a mere boy; fair-haired and delicate—one George Tuberville. Strange things are told of his practices. ’Tis

said that he is ever star-gazing ; nay, they do affirm that he is in secret intercourse with evil spirits, and has given out that an eclipse of the sun is to take place on Saint Isaac's day."

" We are not so credulous, good Bomelius. What! shall it be said that this outlandish witling shall pry into the constellations which light the sky of Russia without our sanction ? This is an invasion of our Czardom, and doth concern us, Master Bomelius. Let the foreigner interfere with his own luminaries. These are our property ; and without our royal permission, he shall not be suffered to commune with them. But we will question this forward prophet ourselves." And by his order messengers were immediately dispatched to bring the rash astrologer to the presence.

Master Tuberville was very much taken by surprise, when, somewhere about midnight, he was intruded upon by an unceremonious order to repair forthwith to the Kremlin. He was at

the very moment working an hexameter, the twin rhyme for which had puzzled him more than the line itself; and he most irreverently wished the Czar snugly interred in *Poets' Corner*, when he was thus interrupted. But making a virtue of necessity, he followed his guide, and by the time he had passed the threshold of the palace, had succeeded in the satisfactory completion of his verse; for, though Walker's rhyming lexicon had not in that age assisted our poet, he proved himself on this occasion a rhyming *walker*.

The slim person of the secretary was, in the estimation of all true Muscovites, but a sorry recommendation: and though his countenance was intelligent, they looked with contempt upon the slender proportions of his frame, their only standard of manly beauty being quantity, and the bulk of a Falstaff the only criterion of elegance and noble deportment.

The secretary, however, whose modesty sub-

dued his just pretensions to almost too narrow limits, even where his talents could be appreciated, and sought with diffidence the smile of approbation, felt all the nobler feelings of man rush to his heart, and flush his cheek, when he encountered the interrogatories of the bloated and ignorant courtiers of a barbarian.

“So!” exclaimed Ivan, as he fixed his suspicious and scrutinizing eye upon Tuberville, “we hear that thou dost deal in necromancy, assortest with the evil one, and with thy sorcery dost inspect the heavenly constellations; and without our sanction dost make observation of that high canopy which spreads over holy Russia. Though ’tis not given us to invade the firmament, yet it pertains to us to restrain the audacious mortal who would seek there for knowledge we have not.”

The secretary was lost in amazement at this most singular allegation.

“ Now, sir, we are disposed to allow thee to look into heaven, provided thou dost honestly acquaint us with what thou dost observe there. Say! what of this eclipse we hear thou hast prenoted ?”

“ It is, your majesty, an eclipse of the sun, which on Saint Isaac’s day, between the hours of one and three, will be observable in Moscow’s city.”

“ Now doth this smack of sorcery !” impatiently observed the Czar. “ And dost thou maintain that it is in the power of thy science to proclaim such forthcoming event ?”

The astrologer was puzzled how to elucidate the “ prodromi” of an eclipse to a man whose knowledge of spherical evolutions was evidently very limited. Suiting, therefore, his language to his auditor, he firmly replied—

“ The science of astrology, your majesty, is one of endless calculation ; yet hath it certain evidences, which lead on to accurate

inferences; and since we know by past occurrences that such evolutions of our solar system are forerunners of great events to the inhabitants of our earth, so is it desirable we should be prepared, and forestall Heaven's visitations by repentance of our sins."

"Dost insinuate that we have aught to fear by thy prognostications?" inquired the Czar, with growing interest.

"Great Czar! I am no prophet; yet, from certain laws laid down by the learned in this vast science, some general inferences may be drawn."

"We hear thee," observed Ivan, as the Englishman paused for permission to proceed.

"The quality of the events is known from the nature of the sign in which is the eclipse."

"Now what portends the sign to which thou dost allude?"

"The moon, 'the ladye of the ascendant,' eclipsing the sun in his own house, doth show

and declare that inferior and designing men shall usurp and eclipse the glory of the great and mighty.”

The courtiers tittered, as they endeavoured to draw off the attention of the Czar, conscious that the prognostications of the astrologer would neither be relished by his majesty, nor prove complimentary to the fealty of his subjects.

But Ivan’s attention was intently rivetted on the speaker.

“ For thus saith Giuffus,” continued Tuberville,—“ It threatens destruction to the fruits of the earth ; proclaims the invasion of huge armies ; announces terrible wars—slaughter of men ; predicts the burning of towns, theft, rapine, depopulation ; it menaces magistrates, princes, and great kings ; it bodes revolution !”

The Czar turned pale.

“ Thou sayest, ’tis for Saint Isaac’s day.

We will ourselves observe the phenomenon, though we like not the results thy prophecy would foretell. But if thou art leagued with the damned, and in thy sorcery dost operate upon our destiny, be sure our wrath shall visit thee. Away! Lead him hence! His presence doth conjure up foul fiends! they dance around me! Away!"

Master Tuberville availed himself of the earliest hint to depart, prudently surmising that the black looks cast upon him boded as much evil to himself as he had foretold to others of the forthcoming eclipse, and he hastily effected his retreat.

Sir Thomas Randolph was truly delighted when his secretary returned, safe and sound, though in some trepidation. The unusual and despotic demeanour of the Czar ever perplexed him; and the arbitrary commands both he and his secretary had received to appear at the

palace, unattended and disarmed, naturally inspired him with diffidence and suspicion.

The warmth of regard which greeted the secretary on the part of the ambassador, was a proof of the esteem in which he was held, nor did they bid good night until they had passed an hour of friendly intercourse and conviviality, with the kindly aid of a glass of mulled malmsey.

Tuberville was no sooner alone, than his thoughts turned intuitively to the land of his love; and in the solitude of the midnight hour, his imagination quickly conjured up vivid reminiscences of old friends, and happy and intelligent faces surrounded and inspired him. Singling out from these choice spirits a valued and boon companion of former times, the muse guided his hand, as he addressed himself—

To Parker.

My Parker, paper, pen, and inke, were made to write,
 And idle heads, that little do, haue leisure to indite :
 Wherefore, respecting these, and thine assured loue,
 If I would write no newes to thee, thou might'st my pen re-
 proue ;

And sithence fortune thus hath shou'd my shippe on shore,
 And made me seeke another realme unseene of me before,
 The maners of the men I purpose to declare,
 And other priuate points besides, which strange and geazon
 are.

The Russie men are round of bodies, fully fac'd,
 The greatest part with bellies bigge that ouerhang the waste,
 Flat-headed for the most, with faces nothing faire,
 But browne, by reason of the stoue, and closeness of the aire :
 It is their common vse to shaue or els to sheare
 Their heads, for none in all the land long lolling locks doth
 weare,

Vnlesse perhaps he haue his souereigne prince displeas'd,
 For then he neuer cuts his haire, vntill he be appeas'd—
 A certaine signe to know who in displeasure be,
 For euery man that viewes his head will say, Loe this is he.
 And during all the time he lets his locks to grow,
 Dares no man for his life to him a face of friendship show.

Their garments be not gay, nor handsome to the eye,
 A cap aloft their heads they haue, that standeth very hie,
 Which colpack they do terme. They weare no ruffes at all;
 The best haue collars set with pearle, which they rubasca
 call.

Their shirts in Russie long, they work them downe before,
 And on the sleeues, with coloured silks, two inches good and
 more.

Aloft their shirts they weare a garment iacket wise
 Hight Oncriadka, and about his burlie waste he tyes
 His portkies, which in stead of better breeches be :
 Of linnen cloth that garment is, * * * * *

A paire of yarmen stocks to keepe the cold away,
 Within his boots the Russie weares, the heeles they vnderlay,
 With clouting clamps of steel, sharpe-pointed at the toes,
 And ouer all a shuba furd, and thus the Russe goes,
 Well butned is the shube, according to his state ;
 Some silke, of siluer other some : but those of poorestrate
 Do weare no shubs at all, but grosser gownes to sight,
 That reacheth downe beneath the calfe, and that Armacha
 hight ;

These are the Russies robes. The richest vse to ride
 From place to place, his seruant runnes, and followes by his
 side,

The Cassacke beares his felt, to force away the raine :
Their bridles are not very braue, their saddles are but plaine.
No bits, but snaffles all, of birch their saddles be,
Much fashioned like the Scottish seates, broad flakes to keepe
the knee

From sweating of the horse, the pannels larger farre
And broader be then ours, they vse short stirrups for the warre :
For when the Russie is pursued by cruel foe,
He rides away, and suddenly betakes him to his boe,
And bends me but about in saddle as he sits,
And therewithall amidst his race, his following foe he hits.
Their bowes are very short, like Turkie bowes outright,
Of sinowes made with birchen barke, in cunning maner
dight.

Small arrowes, cruell heads, that fell and forked bee,
Which being shot out from those bowes, a cruel way will flee.
They seldome use to shoo their horse, vnlesse they ride
In post vpon the frozen flouds, then cause they shall not slide,
He sets a slender calke, and so he rides his way.
The horses of the countrey go good fourescore versts a day,
And all without the spurre once pricke them, and they skippe,
But goe not forward on their way, the Russie hath his whippe
To rappe him on the ribbes, for though all booted bee,
Yet shall you not a paire of spurres in all the countrey see.

The common game is chesse, almost the simplest will
 Both give a cheeke and eke a mate, by practise comes their skill
 Againe they dice as fast, the poorest rogues of all
 Will sit them downe in open field, and there to gaming fall.
 Their dice are very small, in fashion like to those
 Which we doe vse, he takes them vp and ouer thumbe he
 throwes,
 Not shaking them a whit, they cast suspiciously,
 And yet I deeme them voyd of art that dicing most apply.
 At play, when siluer lacks, goes saddle, horse, and all,
 And eache thing els worth siluer walkes, although the price
 be small,
 Because thou louest to play friend Parker other while,
 I wish thee there the weary day with dicing to beguile.
 But thou weart better farre at home, I wist it well,
 And wouldest be loath among such louts so long a time to
 dwell;
 Then judge of vs thy friends, what kinde of life we had,
 That neere the frozen pole to waste our weary dayes were glad.
 In such a sauage soil, where lawes do beare no sway,
 But all is at the king his will, to saue or else to slay.
 But that sans cause, God wot, if so his minde be such,
 But what meane I with kings to deale? we ought no saints to
 touch.

Conceive the rest yourselfe, and deeme what liues they lead,
 Where lust is lawe, and subjects liue continually in dread ;
 And where the best estates haue none assurance good
 Of lands, of liues, nor nothing falles vnto the next of blood.
 But all of custome doeth vnto the prince redowne,
 And all the whole reuenue comes vnto the king his crowne.
 Good faith I see thee muse at what I tell thee now,
 But true it is, no choice, but all at princes pleasure bow,
 So Tarquine ruled Rome, as thou remembrest well,
 And what his fortune was at last, I know thy selfe canst tell.
 Where will in common weale doth beare the onely sway,
 And lust is lawe, the prince and realme must needs in time
 decay.

The strangenesse of the place is such for sundry things I see,
 As if I woulde, I cannot write ech priuate point to thee.
 The colde is rare, the people rude, the prince so full of pride,
 The realme so stored with monks and nunnes, and priests on
 every side :
 The maners are so Turkie like, the men so full of guile,
 The women wanton, temples stuf with idols that defile
 The seats that sacred ought to be, the customes are so quaint,
 As if I would describe the whole, I feare my pen would faint.
 In summe I say I neuer saw a prince that so did raigne,
 Nor people so beset with saints, yet all but vile and vaine.

Wilde Irish are as ciuill as the Russies in their kinde,
 Hard choice which is the best of both, ech bloody, rude, and
 blinde.

If thou bee wise, as wise thou art, and wilt be ruld by me,
 Lie still at home, and couet not those barbarous coasts to see;
 No good befallles a man that seeks, and findes no better place,
 No ciuill customes to be learn'd, where God bestowes no
 grace.

And truely ill they do deserue to be belou'd of God,
 That neither loue nor stand in awe of his assured rod:
 Which though be long, yet plagues at last the vile and beastly
 sort
 Of sinfull wights, that all in vice do place their chiefest sport.

Adieu, friend Parker, if thou list, to know the Russes well,
 To Sigismundus booke repaire, who all the trueth can telle,
 For he long erst in message went vnto that sauage king,
 Sent by the Pole, and true report in ech respect did bring,
 To him I recommend my selfe, to ease my penne of paine,
 And now at last, do wish thee well, and bid farewell, againe.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Parmi les chefs entreprenans des Cossacques du Volga, se trouvaient alors Jermak—Jean Koltzo (condamné à mort),” &c.—KARAMSIN, vol. ix. p. 481.

“ Se fosse concesso a questa gente il potersi ogni giorno imbricare, tra loro istessi si destruggerebbono perciocchè come sono imbriacli, perdono affatto il cervello e la ragione, e quasi altratante bestie tra loro incrudeliscono, dandosi de' coltelli, de' pugnali, e d'altre simili arme.”—ALESSANDRO GUAGNINO, DI MOSCOVIA.

THE cellar of mine host of the isba was somewhat crammed, when the whole posse of the royal butcher-guard were thrust into it by the unceremonious Donskoï Cossacques; but when they received, in addition to their company, the goodly person of the landlord himself,

they literally compelled the portly intruder to make his way over the heads of the gentlemen, not without the auxiliary to his speed of a punch or two. Thanks to the precautions of the Cossacques, or it might have fared worse with honest Tunbelly, had the butchers been in possession of any of the implements of their calling.

But be it owned to their credit, due subordination was maintained by their leader, our worthy acquaintance, Theodore Basmanoff; and at his direction, a butt of quass was turned on end, the head knocked in, and mine host unceremoniously plunged therein, to make room for the more respectable portion of the company, the landlord's lips being just "a fleur d'eau," enabling him to appreciate most conveniently the quality of the liquor in which he was soaking.

"Now, boys!" cried one of the Opritchnina,

with soldier-like familiarity, "after all, we have only squared accounts with these rascally freebooters, the Cossacques. They are for the women—we for the wine—so here goes! at all events, old fellow," addressing the landlord, "we sha'n't want to trouble thee for the key of the cellar; so, friend, just point out which of all this physic is most beneficial for my complaint—an inveterate thirst, which has clung to me from my birth."

"Aye! and a fig for his majesty's edict against drunkenness throughout the land. Are we not underground?"

"Of a verity," replied another; "so quick to the tapping. Brother, what have we here?"

Our Diogenes in the tub, whose intellects had been marvellously refreshed in his cold quarters, and who had been floundering in the butt, endeavouring to keep his head above water, felt a sudden energy at the threat, which effectually buoyed him up, and in a lacka-

daisical tone, which betrayed his despair, cried out—

“ Beseech you, think not of it—’tis the refuse of my cellar—the very lees—poison, I do assure ye.”

“ Nay, then we’ll have none of it, though for the sake of humanity,” said the benevolent guardsman of the merciful Opritchnina, “ methinks we had better let it run to waste.”

The landlord came to the surface like a cork; the last words rendered him speechless.

“ Humanity!” interrupted one of the brotherhood; “ had we not better leave it for the benefit of our successors, the Cossacques of the Wolga, who are droughthy as fishes? we’ll make better use of our time—so here’s for the next butt.”

“ Grant me your patience, most noble gentlemen,” cried the landlord, now puffing and blowing, whilst the quass inundated his mouth more frequently than he desired—“ Grant me your patience. The veriest

treasure in the vault is that which you have most despised. Do but release me from this tub, and its contents will be found more palatable than those of any of the casks around you"—imploringly ejaculated the innkeeper, whose fits of fright had certainly so convulsed him, that the liquor was in a state of agitation from his incessant commotion.

But, highly as the landlord extolled the national beverage, these temperate observers of the edict of the Czar were disposed to relish something more worthy their refined palates than the quass in which they had soused their friend, and tapping a small shtoff, it proved to be neither more nor less than a very delicious cordial, *romaneya*, to which the whole fraternity paid such incessant devotion, that the lightened vessel soon told by its hollow sound how effectually it was relieved.

If the party drowned their grief in liquor, the spirit of the innkeeper was now almost

drowned in his quass. In vain he entreated, he implored their commiseration. They stuck to his barrels with bacchanalian constancy. But even wine-casks have an end—and there remained now but the rejected one, that which the poor innkeeper had denominated the refuse of his cellar, it was their last resource, and to it they went. At the first draught, the prelude to which was wry faces, a general murmur of surprise and delight ran through the assembly of toppers. It came upon the landlord's heart like the sentence on a condemned culprit, and what with plunging, kicking, and swearing, never did quass before contain such a *body*, or possess so much *spirit*.

The refuse had been tapped and tasted. It was the immaculate *vishefka*—that cherry cordial, which flowed ever at the banquets of the royal slobode, as a beverage worthy the lips of the Czars.

To it they went; and as though they were

letting out the blood of the innkeeper, a groan accompanied every bumper.

And when the precious liquor was exhausted, the ungrateful guests turned upon their half-drowned host, and poured upon him a volley of abuse; and taking hold of him for the deceit he had endeavoured to put upon them, dipped him alternately, like a candle, in a vat of tallow, and in his favourite quass, whilst at every immersion he gulped down a draft of that national beverage, which at a later day received from the Gallic invader the nickname of "limonade de cochon;" and to judge by his grimaces, he looked not sufficient patriot to set any particular value on its flavour.

To what lengths the graceless guests of his cellar might have proceeded after sousing him in such a merciless fashion, and making his poor pate a mark for every missile they could lay hands upon, thereby inducing him to make sundry duckings to escape the coming favour,

we can only surmise, for at last their gallant officer, Theodore Basmanoff, who had been a silent and almost unobservant spectator, thought proper to interfere in behalf of mine host; the more particularly, as he had been cogitating on an expedient for bringing those notorious marauders, the Cossacques, to book for their uncourteous prank; and the landlord's testimony appearing to him indispensable, he peremptorily insisted upon the preservation of the fragment of life still remaining in the well-steeped skin of the master of the isba.

The young Boyar was thoughtful. The humiliation, the indignity he had suffered at the hands of a mere marauder, had been considerably aggravated in his estimation by the lovely being who had been a witness of it—the daughter of the merchant. Never before had his libertine and practised eye dwelt upon such beauty—she was the realization of his dream of love. Blest with the apparition of an angel, his

worship became at once fixed and concentrated. His heart succumbed to the bright divinity that had met his ravished sight. And, oh! the cruel, the torturing thought, that came with the conviction of his own devotion. He had outraged the delicacy of the enchanting girl, and driven her for protection to the outlaw, and was now incarcerated himself like a felon. His maddening shame roused fierce projects of revenge upon the Cossacque. He relied upon his influence with the Czar, aided by the recent insult offered to his elect guard of the Opritchnina, to enable him to raise a force sufficient to crush all the freebooters of the Wolga and the Don.

As for the lady—judging the Cossacque after his own standard of fidelity to the Czar—he had no doubt that he reserved her for himself; that the protection he had bestowed was a mere “*ruse de guerre*” to gain possession of her, and that so far from escorting her to Moscow,

he would, in a few hours, have borne her far away, and thus would she be for ever lost to his love.

Never before had Theodore experienced such acute suffering. In vain he sought to divert his mind from the cause. The only consolation that offered itself was revenge, and he dwelt on the additional spur to the wrath of his sovereign which presented itself in the abduction by these marauders of the Wolga of the fairest maiden of his empire, on her way, by command and under the auspices of the Czar himself, to claim his Czarina's diadem.

The wine had operated very differently upon the spirits of his comrades.

The tide of merriment of the gentle assembly, after the rebuke of their leader, took a different course, and a song having been called for, the whole troop proposed to join in chorus, and they hailed the patriotic stave of—

Long life to the Czar—let all bless him !

For he has the goods of this earth.

Lovely woman was made to caress him,

And man is his right from his birth.

The world is his footstool :—'twas Heaven

That sent such a Sovereign to rule us,

And long may his sceptre be given

To flog, and to love, and to school us.

Hoïda—Gossudar !

Sing long live the Czar !

O ! greater is Muscovy's master

Than all the proud kings of the west ;

Holy Russia fears no such disaster

As political liberty's pest.

Of pastors, the Czar is high pastor,—

Takes care of the soul and the chest ;

If we lag, how he makes us run faster !

If we die,—he allows us to rest.

Hoïda—Gossudar !

Sing long live the Czar !

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh’d—
She did not speak, and yet replied ;
There are ten thousand tones and signs
We hear and see, but none defines—
Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o’erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense ;
Which link the burning chain, that binds,
Without their will, young hearts and minds ;
Conveying, as the electric wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.
I saw, and sigh’d—in silence wept,
And still reluctant distance kept.”

MAZEPPA.

WE will now return to the more pacific guests of the inn, no longer in fear of their late obstreperous companions, whom we have seen safely lodged in cool quarters.

They were no sooner disposed of in the sum-

mary manner we have related, than the isba was further cleared of all guests, except the young lady, her father, and their champion, who ordering his followers to hold themselves in readiness, turned his attention to his companions.

The merchant was about to address him with feelings which may be easily conceived, when the Cossacque hastily preventing him—

“I can anticipate and appreciate what you have to say, but more remains to be done, and the safety of your daughter will be my best recompense. You must proceed to Moscow instantly, before the news can possibly reach the city of this defeat of the Opritchnina.”

“Enough—interrupt me not, and I will tell thee how thou mayst acquit thyself of an obligation to Koltzo the Cossacque.”

At that name the merchant's daughter, whose gaze had rested upon the handsome stranger with the softest light that gratitude ever gave

birth to, and in which her heart sought to convey still more, involuntarily shuddered; and the first word which escaped her lips, unconsciously, was derogatory to her liberator's fame, as from habit she exclaimed, "Koltzo the Bandit!"

"Such is the name by which I am distinguished, however undeservedly," replied the Cossacque, but not with that firmness of tone with which he had hitherto spoken. "I have lived long enough to see an arrant coward wear a conqueror's name, and a proscribed hero that of robber. Lady, fortune has done much for the undeserving, and has played many an honest man false. Such as you deem me, I would not exchange my Cossacque's wolf-skin for the Czar's imperial ermine, stained with the blood of the best and the bravest of the land."

"Oh, forgive, forgive me, sir!" exclaimed the lovely girl, as the consciousness of her offensive and involuntary words flushed her cheek; and

she clasped her hands with fervour, whilst her beseeching looks, as they met the softened glance of Koltzo, infused into his soul a balm for which his spirit would again have borne the wound.

The warrior resuming his wonted look of confidence and dignity, again addressed the merchant—

“A hireling of these butchers of the Czar, whom I encountered as I left the isba, to obtain a rescue, was compelled by threats to reveal what concerns thyself.

“If he has told me truly, thou art the merchant Sabakin, summoned, upon report of thy daughter’s loveliness, to bring her to the court, where the Czar now exercises his fastidious taste, as sole judge of the merits of the beauties of the land. It seems the chief of the troop is one of high rank and power, whose sister now abides the Czar’s decision—hearing of thy daughter’s pre-eminent attractions, and fearing

the result of comparison with her, he laid wait for thee here to prevent thy progress, and thereby delay thy daughter's appearance at all hazards, until the important election be made."

"How shall I thank thee for our preservation!" exclaimed the merchant.

"Some little would I say in mine own behalf, but that time presses. Yet, 'tis my heart's exultation that the world will soon wipe away the stigma cast upon my name," and the Cossacque's eyes met timidly those of the merchant's daughter; but so much of earnest inquiry was there, that the adventurer, animated by the interest of the beautiful girl in his behalf, rapidly recounted his story.

The growing intensity of her look, the heightened colour of her cheek, as now fear, now surprise, now admiration, by turns, predominated, and bespoke the warmth of the heart, responded to her preserver's narrative.

Satisfaction beamed on the countenance of the merchant, whilst the honest and hearty shake he gave the hand of the Cossacque, expressed his respect and gratitude. But time hastened on, and suddenly recollecting himself, Koltzo approached the fair child of the merchant, and bending his knee, thus addressed her:—

“Lady! if the narrative which was called forth by an earnest wish to claim your esteem, has obtained for me your sympathy, let me here sue for your forgiveness. The hour is nigh when that fair and virgin brow will wear the diadem of Russia. Thy subject was born a Cossacque, and to our race Muscovy ascribes the gift of foresight. I am no magician, lady, yet in my romantic and wild career, the star of destiny has never yet deceived me, and now a prescient light breaks in upon me, and I behold the Czarina of this mighty land.”

Amazement was depicted in Marfa's counte-

nance, as he took her hand, and paid a subject's homage to her presence.

“ Vouchsafe to hear my prayer;” continued the Cossacque, with fervour. “ Until the loud peal of Moscow's bells announces the Czar's election of his bride, will I and my brave warriors retire from public observation. In that propitious hour I shall come forward, and in the presence of my Czar and Empress bring forth such claims to pardon as may be furnished withal. Then let Koltzo and his brave associates in danger and in victory, entreat thy intercession for their forgiveness.”

Overcome with contending emotions, the generous daughter of Sabakin, with all the romance of youth and innocence, divested of ambition, looked more than mercy on the warrior; and her bright eyes veiled in tears, conveyed more confidence to the Cossacque's heart, than all the utterance which the tongue can fashion.

One rapturous moment of that communing bliss elapsed, and Koltzo, conscious of the fleeting time, suddenly resigned with a burning kiss the hand that had remained passive in his own, and left the apartment.

His absence was of short duration, and when he re-appeared, it was to announce to the merchant that his equipage was now in readiness; and the servants entering at the same time, assisted the lady to enter the arbas. The Cossacque having left some of his followers to keep watch over the prisoners, and the innkeeper confined in his own cellar with his turbulent guests, now mounted horse.

The merchant was no longer surprised to perceive a little army of Cossacques surrounding his cortège, and as the party resumed their journey at a rapid pace, the garde d'honneur formed a circle of lances above the heads of the travellers, the points of which reflected the bright beams of the moon, and

formed a novel addition to their travelling equipage.

Ere break of day the wayfarers reached the outward boundary of the city, and at a signal from Koltzo they halted.

A few words were exchanged between him and the merchant. A long pressure of the hand assured the Cossacque of the gratitude and sincerity of his new friend, as they concerted their future plans; and when his lovely daughter leaned forward to receive the salute of honour from the warrior, she inclined her maiden brow, and Koltzo pressed his trembling lips on her chaste forehead. Night's friendly veil concealed emotions which, in her blushing cheek and tearful eye, would else have been revealed.

They parted; yet in that hour of separation, two hearts were linked by never avowed ties; and Koltzo, the once redoubtable robber, whose name a few short hours ago would

have inspired terror and aversion in her young virgin breast, now held sole sovereignty there.

The Cossacque, when his troop had mustered to retrace their steps, suffered them to proceed, whilst he turned a last and lingering look on the arbas, which was rapidly bearing away the being on whom his fate depended.

END OF VOL. I.

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